

Teachers' experiences of conflict with school principals:

The impact on teachers, teaching and learning

By

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ABSTRACT

The year 1994 was a historic and an extremely important one for South Africa. The transition from the apartheid era prior to 1994 to a democracy subsequently heralded many changes especially in the Department of Education. There was a complete overhaul which warranted the writing of a new constitution for the Republic of South Africa, passing new legislation and change in policies and restructuring of the demarcations for education nationally. Schools were transformed with the amalgamation of all races which brought about a new culture in schools and in teaching and learning. The voices of the teacher unions were more vociferous and louder. However, many principals are still on the bandwagon of authoritarian, autocratic and dictatorial dispositions in running their schools. This type of leadership was subtly infiltrated by the apartheid government among heads of institutes. Despite twenty years of democracy this study has shown that principals' leadership styles and behaviour towards teachers has not changed to comply with provisions of the constitution, thus leading to conflict between teachers and principals.

A literature review nationally has shown that research on many aspects of conflict and the lack of management skills among principals of schools were done. However, areas where research was lacking were the types of conflict situation inflicted by principals on teachers and the effects these conflicts have on teachers and teaching and learning. Hence to fill this gap, even partially, these aspects were researched. This study adopted the interpretative paradigm and through qualitative research methodology, purposeful sampling of the participants and semi-structured interviews, the following were some of the findings that surfaced. First, most importantly, what emerged are the deleterious effects of conflicts on the physical and mental well-being of the teachers. In the second instance the repercussions of strained social relationships between the affected teachers and their colleagues, family and friends. Thirdly, principals tend to conceal conflict situations that arise hence; the public and senior officials of the Department of Basic Education are unaware of such occurrences. The fourth finding showed that teachers were unaware of the legal structures and organisations that existed in the Department of Education, for example, the Educator Psychological Service (EPS) and South African Council for Educators (SACE), School Governing Body (SGB) and School Management Team (SMT) which they can revert to for assistance. Further, teacher training courses did not equip them to cope with conflicts with the principal. Participants also highlighted the fact that principals ought to be mentored and prepared holistically in school management and leadership. Finally, this study also lists recommendations for further research in the different aspects of conflicts.

DECLARATION

I, Mahomed Afzel Kaloo declare that

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ETHICAL CLEARANCE APPROVAL



31 October 2013

Mr Mahomed A Kaloo (7507578)
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Protocol reference number: HSS/1235/013M

Project title: Teachers' experiences of conflict between teachers and principals: The effect on teachers and teaching and learning

Dear Mr Kaloo,

Expedited Approval

I wish to inform you that your application has been granted Full Approval.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully


.....
Dr Shenuka Singh (Acting Chair)
/ms

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cc Academic Leader Research: Dr MN Davids
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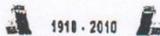
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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to:

- All the dedicated teachers who have had conflicts with their principals, and who despite being afflicted physiologically and traumatised psychologically, continue to teach our children dedicatedly and offer their unstinting support just so that the future generation may lead a better life.

- My dear wife Jehan Kaloo, who was so patient, supportive and forbearing during the entire period of this study.

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- My dear wife Jehan Kaloo, for being so patient, supportive and forbearing while I spent many hours being engrossed in this study.

ABBREVIATIONS

ASEE	The American Society for Ethics in Education
ELRC	Education Labour Relations Council
IC	Interview Committee
LIFO	Last In First Out
LO	Life Orientation
NAPTA	National Association for Prevention of Teacher Abuse
PPN	Post Provisioning Norm
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
R and R	Rationalisation and Redeployment
SACE	South African Council for Educators
SEM	Superintendent of Education (Management)

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This research study focuses on teachers' experiences of conflict between them and principals, and also to explore the effects of such conflicts on teaching and learning. This chapter provides the background to the problem being studied. It also discusses the context of the study, rationale for the study, key research questions, and the structure of the dissertation.

Since 1994 our South Africa Education has undergone many radical changes through a series of policy initiatives (Department of Education, 1996b, p. 11). Johnson (2005) states that prior to 1994 the internal management structure of the Department of Education adopted a cascading style in disseminating instructions and information, from the then inspectors of schools to the principals and the principals in turn informed their heads of departments who finally relayed the instructions or information to the level one teacher. Bush (2007) opines that this practice in management inhibits the building of close bonds among the members of the staff of the school. These problems were compounded with the amalgamation of all races in one school as opposed to racially segregated schools as in the apartheid era (Badat, 1995).

McLennan and Thurlow (1997) draw our attention to the implications of new management changes as a result of the implementation of policies and legislation subsequent to the apartheid era. Principals were forced to change their management styles to manage the change. Donahue (1997) indicates how serious these challenges could be in the many schools where the school became a battleground for conflicts among principal, teacher, students and their parents. Concurrently, teachers were becoming more unionised and the voices of unions are louder than before. These facts presented fertile grounds for conflicts between teachers and principals. Furthermore, in South Africa, when compared to the United States, for example, there seems to be a blanket that covers the conflicts that occurs between teachers and principals, hence, not much is heard or written on these occurrences.

Cognisance should also be taken of the fact that the leadership behaviour of principals determines to a large extent the ethos, culture and environmental atmosphere that prevails in a school. The disposition of the principal could either enhance the ambience of teaching and

learning and good relationships among all stakeholders or could bring about disharmony among staff, learners, parents and the community (Mafora, 2013).

It is against the backgrounds of these facts that the choice was made to investigate teachers' experiences of conflicts between teachers and principals; the effects on teachers and teaching and learning. In order to empirically achieve this, included in this chapter are the objectives and the two research questions which guided the study. Furthermore, this chapter provides the significance of the study; definition of terms and concepts; the theoretical framework and literature that were reviewed during this study; the design and methodology of the research employed; the research paradigm including the demarcation of this study are also outlined. Lastly, the layout of the study, which summarizes what each chapter of the dissertation embodies, is outlined briefly.

1.2 Background of the study

The teachers are the most important components in imparting knowledge to the learners. Blase and Blase (2003) have disclosed numerous incidents of misdirected wielding of power by principals daily on their staff and learners. They highlight the severe repercussions of these inflictions in terms of physiological effects and psychological trauma, expressing in detail how detrimental these impacts are on teachers' health and social lives. Schools are places of learning and as such the environment must be conducive for effective teaching and learning to ensue. Competent leadership is critical for creating this environment in schools where students can learn and teachers can successfully teach. However, these goals cannot materialise if the teacher is abused mentally, verbally, emotionally and physically (Spencer as cited in Long, 2012). In his writing of the **Workplace Bulling in Schools Project**, he is of the opinion that the teacher loses his exuberance of life, self-respect, self-confidence, motivation, determination and his way of life. This tenor of situation brings about an estrangement in the relationship between the teacher and learners. Conversation with my colleagues in my 33 years of teaching experience, have often revealed mistreatment of teachers by principals. Sadly though, most of these incidences were not arbitrated upon since these were swept under the carpet by the principals. The reasons for these are that principals are afraid of investigations and enquiries made by senior management officials of the department. Teachers on the other hand are reluctant to report such incidents for fear of retribution or being transferred to another school and victimisation. Principals are often, it

seems, oblivious to the detrimental effects that a dysfunctional work environment has on educators or they simply do not care. Blase & Blase (2003) profess that principals who lack skills in leadership and employ a cordial relationship between themselves and their staff and hence, be effective leaders, tend to destroy the personal and professional lives of teachers. These authors are also of the opinion that a considerable amount of research was conducted to show the abuse that is happening in the workplace, especially in The United States of America, United Kingdom, Europe, Australia and South Africa.

1.3 Rationale for the study

Personally, in my thirty two (32) years of teaching experience I have witnessed many incidents of confrontations between teachers and principals and the devastating effects these conflicts have on teachers and teaching and learning. In one instance, one of my colleagues, being at that time Head of Department, had committed suicide allegedly because of conflicts between himself and the principal, apparently where unrealistic demands were made by the principal. Another of my colleague was transferred by the principal being in coercion with the then inspectors of schools to another school, fortunately for him, nearer to his home, because of his views which were contrary to the principal's in the running of affairs of the school and his questioning of choices, made by the principal on various aspects on promotion of teachers. Incidents of such a serious nature warrant investigation into teacher-principal conflicts and its consequences.

There are many researchers who have written on causes of conflict between teachers and principals, conflict resolution, conflict management, the nature of teacher conflict (Ngongo. 1993; Jonkman, 2006; Makibi 2010; Remani & Zhimin, 2010; Msila 2012; Salleh & Adulpakdee, 2012) among others. However comparatively, there seems to be limited research and writings on the effects of conflicts between teachers and principals on teachers and teaching and learning, especially pertaining to South African schools, in spite of the major overhaul in the South African Education since 1994.

The above scenario motivated my choice on these aspects of research, to fill the gap. It is hoped that this lays a platform for more intensive and revealing research to be conducted in order to bring to the surface the scum that could possibly be waved away through highlighting of incidents.

1.4 Research questions

The key research questions are:-

- (1) What are the experiences of teachers who have had conflicts with principals and how does it affect them?
- (2) How does conflict between teachers and principals affect teaching and learning?

1.5 Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are:-

- (1) To investigate the effects of conflicts between teachers and principals on teachers.
- (2) To determine the effects of conflicts between teachers and principals on teaching and learning.

1.6 Significance of the study

The importance of the study is guided by the key questions:

What are the experiences of teachers who have had conflicts with their principals? How these conflicts affected them and teaching and learning? The above basic questions align this study to perceive the experiences of the teachers from anecdotal accounts of conflicts that occurred between them and their principals. It is the intention of this study also to reveal the destructive effects conflicts have on teachers which are physiological, psychological and emotional. Such effects have negative consequences for the teacher in relationships between and among teachers, their families, as well as being ineffective and despondent in teaching in a classroom (Blase & Blase, 2003). These authors also have in their study revealed that when abusive principals are confronted with their unbecoming disposition and its detrimental effects, they simply deny all allegations, blame the teacher and continue to harass their targeted victims. It is the fervent hope of the researcher that readers of this dissertation, educators, principals, and lecturers at colleges and universities are enlightened about the conflicts experienced by teachers; how and why these are not disclosed by principals. Furthermore, lecturers at universities in preparing students should take cognisance of the fact that they do not enlighten student teachers on the various aspects of conflicts and how to handle and cope with conflict situations (Hodgkinson, 1991).

The significance of the study could not be more emphasised if the relevant readers of this dissertation mentioned above, especially some principals to whom these may be applicable, realise their gross abuse to teachers and change their attitude and approach to make the school a better place which would be conducive to teaching and learning. Sondgrass and Blunt (2009) assert that unmanaged conflict can create dysfunctional schools which deprive learners of their rights to citizenship through free and equal education. These authors also highlight the values embedded in the constitution of the Republic of South Africa such as human dignity and equality which cannot be attained in an atmosphere and contexts where conflict is rife. Hence, this study would bring to the attention of those concerned, especially principals, how conflict could lead to a dysfunctional school which consequently would affect teachers and impinge on the teaching and learning of learners (Prinsloo, 2001).

The next section defines terms and concepts which will elucidate understanding with further reading.

1.7 Definition of terms and concept

Wright (1990) states that conflict is a Latin derivative from the word *configure* which implies the confrontation of opposing forces. This may refer to opposing views between two or more people. From a human point of view these differences could reside within an individual or between two or more individuals which could lead to animosity between people (Kroon, 1991). Gilman (2002) on the other hand states that conflict is the estranged relationship that is created through disagreements. Conflict is “opposing arising from disagreement about goals, thoughts or emotions within or among individuals, teams, departments organisations” (Hellriegl & Slocum, 1996, p. 552). Analogues to the above definitions, more recent definitions of conflict is a struggle or contest between people with opposing needs, ideas, beliefs, values or goals. Defined in broadest terms, conflict denotes the incompatibility of subject position (Diez, Stetter & Albert, 2006). In schools, therefore, differences in opinions and personalities between teachers and principals would lead to conflicts which would affect teachers and teaching and learning.

Conflict is inevitable in any organisation since there is constant interaction among the employees. Conflict, as viewed traditionally, is not necessarily bad but could be good if change is brought about for the betterment of all the stakeholders (Jones, 1994). He also

maintains that the manner in which conflict is handled that makes the outcome positive or negative, meaning that if conflicts are handled effectively, then this leads to an atmosphere that is conducive to teaching and learning. However, if disputes are not resolved amicably then this could lead to physical and emotional violence (Jones, 1994).

Conflict can be categorised into two types, functional and dysfunctional. Ivancevich and Matterson (1996) describe a conflict as functional if the results of that conflict alter the performance of the organisation to increase. Functional conflicts can lead to increased awareness of problems, which when addressed positively can lead to favourable solutions being found which are acceptable to all and the building up of cordial relationships among colleagues. If these alarms are ignored the results could be detrimental but if heeded, the results would be fruitful.

When a disagreement prevents the organisational objectives from being achieved then it is dysfunctional. Swart (2001) also share similar sentiments by maintaining that dysfunctional conflicts are destructive in nature, leads to breakdown in interpersonal relationships, goals of the organisation not being attained and a decrease in productivity. Prinsloo (2001) concurs by saying that dysfunctional conflict is destructive because it prevents goal achievement.

There are a whole host of potential causes of conflict which could arise from competition, personality differences, communication, difference in perception, authority relationships, roles and expectations and personal problems to name a few.

1.8 Theoretical framework and literature review

The theory that frames this study is The Symbolic Interaction Theory. This theory was chosen since it could be viewed as the foundation of Sociological Theory. This theory explores the meaning that people develop which is integrated and expressed symbolically and which also incorporates collegiality among people (Anderson & Taylor, 2009). The Symbolic Interaction Theory emphasises the subjective expressions of the events that a person experiences. Subjectivity is of prime importance implying that people express themselves subjectively, as to how they perceive the situation, which is not necessarily as how it may be viewed objectively by others (Anderson & Taylor, 2009). In this study the subjective meaning of

teachers who are affected by conflicts would be interpreted stemming from the demeaning behaviour of principals. The theoretical framework is discussed in detail in Chapter Two.

Review of literature produced internationally and locally would be reviewed in detail in Chapter Two. Internationally a considerable volume of research has been conducted and written on work abuse particularly in Europe, Australia and South Africa (Blase & Blase, 2003).

In South Africa research has been conducted on various aspects of conflict in schools such as nature of teacher conflict, management of conflict by school principals, conflict management skills and teacher attrition (Ngcongco, 1993; Jonkman, 2006; Meyiwa, 2011; Msila, 2012), to name a few. Nationally it seems very little is written on the effects of conflict on teachers and on teaching and learning whereas in countries like the United States much is written on the topic. Authors like Blase and Blase (2003); Parsons (2005); Horwitz (2008); Schnall (2009); Namie and Namie (2011), have written extensively on various aspects of the repercussions of conflicts between teachers and principals. Owing to the enormity of the abuse to teachers (Long, 2012), organisations like the National Association For Prevention of Teacher Abuse, American for Ethics in Education and The Campaign Against Workplace Bullying offer avenues for teachers to seek recourse. The production of more local literature would expose the occurrences of conflicts between teachers and principals in our schools which we are ignorant about.

Review would entail a combination of local and international writings on the topic to elucidate the concepts in question.

1.9 Research design and methodology

The research design employed in this study is the qualitative method drawing from the interpretive paradigm. Mouton (2001) refers to the research design as a *plan* or *blueprint* that the researcher outlays and follows in doing the research. The method that the researcher chooses depends on the paradigm that the researcher is working in, also the type of information or knowledge the researcher is looking for, the manner in which this is planned to be obtained and how it will be discussed and analysed. This is referred to, as mentioned above, the “fitness for purpose” (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2009, p.78). This alludes to

coherence among the aspects of the method, the paradigm, the data production and the analysis. Painter, Durrheim and TereBlanche (2006) state that a research design is a plan of action that is executed in a research that serves to answer the research questions.

Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2004) concur with the above authors when they make reference to methodology as addressing the deliverance of appropriate data that the research is intended to achieve. They continue to state that the data that is generated and analysed will also be rational since the research is philosophical and suitable. Methodology in education research plays a significant role in describing the precepts of the paradigm used in the research. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) claim that methodology that is used assists in a person's understanding of not only the outcomes or results of the process but also how the process is conducted itself. The appropriateness of correct methodology employed is imperative in achieving what the study aims to achieve.

Since this study employs the qualitative method drawing from the interpretive paradigm, qualitative research methodology was appropriate for this study because the researcher wanted to hear anecdotal accounts from the participants. Mason and Bramble (1997) describe qualitative research as a scholarly inquiry based on context and meaning, emphasising such techniques as content analysis, observations and interviews using natural settings as much as possible. The researcher deemed it appropriate, therefore, to use semi-structured interviews as an instrument to collect data. Semi-structured interviews with teachers was a leverage that the researcher used to generate first-hand information from participants, who were chosen purposefully, who were able to express their feelings and reveal exactly what they wanted to convey. Semi-structured interviews were employed since this method of interview allows for the rearrangement of the order of questions and the choice of dictions are left to the discretion of the interviewer (Corbetta, 2003). He further goes on to emphasise that the researcher is at liberty to manoeuvre the interview as he deems fit, in choosing apt words, asking probing and leading questions for the participants to elaborate in order to give a more detailed account for purposes of elucidation. Questions that the researcher may not have thought about initially could be included.

The interviews were tape recorded. The advantages of tape recording are that the researcher is able to capture every word and the tone of the participant while giving the participant his full attention. When the data was analysed the researcher was able to replay and recall any part of

the conversation which he would have otherwise have omitted if he relied solely on memory or note taking.

1.10 Research paradigm

This study is encompassed by the Interpretivist perspective which is based on the assumption that human life can only be understood from within and therefore focuses on people's subjective experiences (Maree, 2007). McMillan and Schumacher (2006) share a similar sentiment, stating that qualitative research delves into the understanding of social occurrences from the perspective of the participant. This is addressed through giving meaning to the situation and events which the participant has experienced. In this study the experiences of each of the participants will be analysed to explore the experiences of teachers who have had conflicts with principals and the effects on teaching and learning. According to Merriam (1998) it is primarily concerned with making meaning of how people perceive their lives, experiences and structures of the world. Interpretivist use qualitative methods in order to gauge perceptions and experiences of the participants.

Researchers from an interpretive approach believe that there are multiples realities of a single event (Mertens, 2010). Epistemologically, Mertens (2010) advocates that the researcher needs to take into cognisance the experiences of the participants from their perspective since the researcher builds up his knowledge from their experiences. It aims to "give voice" to those whose accounts tend to be marginalised or discounted (Willig, 2001, p. 12). My study seeks to explore and understand the experiences of teachers who have experienced conflicts with their principals, how they are affected and the effects on teaching and learning, deriving data directly from them, thus, ensuring their point of view is accounted for. Cohen et al., (2007) argue that the interpretive paradigm is characterised by a concern for the being. It aims to understand the prejudiced world of human experience.

Six teachers, through purposeful sampling, from four different schools in the same district and ward were interviewed. Merriam (1998) substantiates that the researcher is aware that through purposeful sampling he can collate the most amount of the nature of experiences from his participants and how it affects them. The researcher has 33 years of teaching experience, 21 years of which were in the area intended for study. He is, therefore, aware of teachers who

have experienced conflicts with principals and was thus able to locate his participants purposefully.

According to Vithal and Jansan (2010) validity is an attempt to verify whether the meaning and interpretation of an event is sound. In this study this validity will be ensured by constant checking, questioning and theorizing by the supervisors. Coherence of the study will be ensured.

1.11 Demarcation of the study

In close proximity to the area in which the researcher teaches there are four secondary schools one of which is a combined (primary and secondary) school. Of the four secondary schools that are in close proximity to each other (approximately 5km apart), six teachers through purposeful sampling from these schools were selected for participation in the study. These schools are situated in urban areas, but about 50% of the learners come from nearby townships. In two of the secondary schools the population of the learners is predominantly African (about $\pm 70\%$) whereas the other secondary schools population is predominantly Indians. The staffs ($\pm 98\%$) are made up of Indian teachers, the remaining being African.

1.12 Structure of the study

This section outlines the structure of the report about the study on how conflicts between teachers and principals affect teachers and teaching and learning. This report is divided into five chapters and these are summarised below.

Chapter One

This chapter is an overview of the study. It provides the background, the objectives of the study and the two research questions that guided the study. Furthermore, this chapter provides the significance of the study, definitions of terms and concepts that help to clarify and elucidate conflicts between teachers and principals and the consequent organisational status of the school. It also provides an overview of the theoretical framework, literature that was reviewed in the process of conducting this study, a brief review of the research design and methodology that was employed and the demarcation of the study.

Chapter Two

This chapter presents the theoretical frame work in detail, reviews literature on conflicts between teachers and principals and its effects on teachers and teaching and learning. A critical review of international and national literature that was relevant to the research topic is presented.

Chapter Three

This chapter presents a detailed explanation of the research design, methods and procedures that were employed in conducting the study, and the research instrument that was used for generating data for this research.

Chapter Four

This chapter presents and discusses data that was generated through semi-structured interviews with the participants. The effects of conflicts experienced by the participants that are substantiated by the literature reviewed are presented.

Chapter Five

This chapter presents a synthesis of the salient and pertinent findings on the basis of which recommendations are made.

1.13 Chapter Summary

This chapter introduced the theme of the research project namely, the effects of conflict between teacher and principal on teachers and teaching and learning. It presented the background and rationale for the study, objectives of the study, research questions, and the significance of the study. Brief descriptions of the theoretical framework, literature reviewed, research design and methodology as well as the demarcation of the problem were presented. The next chapter presents details of the theoretical framework and the literature reviews on the effects of conflicts between teacher and principal on teachers and teaching and learning.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Chapter one above presented the background to the study and other important issues related to the orientation to the study. This chapter presents a review of literature on teachers' experiences of conflicts between them and their school principals. Besides the literature review, a theoretical framework that underpins the study is also discussed. The objectives and key questions outlined in Chapter One will in this section be viewed through the lens of authors who have written on how conflicts between teachers and principals affect teachers, teaching and learning. International and national literature on this topic is reviewed. Embarking on an exercise of this nature will assist the researcher in gaining a global insight into various related aspects of the topic, in particular the severity of the conflicts, the extent to which the teachers were affected, the reasons for these conflicts, some of the avenues that are open to assist these teachers, and how these conflicts also affect teaching and learning. Other aspects of interests that would be reviewed would be how data was gleaned by the other authors which would conceptualise the theoretical framework for the study and also provide answers to when and why impetus was gained on writings on this topic.

The theoretical framework that guides and forms the core and underpins this study would be firstly discussed. The literature review which follows is structured firstly, by providing reasons as to why this topic was concealed. Secondly, the effects of conflicts between teachers and their principals on teachers and teaching and learning would be viewed.

2.2 Theoretical framework

The theory that frames this study is the Symbolic Interaction Theory.

Symbolic Interaction Theory

Blase and Blase (2003) relate that there is no empirical studies on principals who are abusive, however, writings related to this topic have been produced. The symbolic interaction point of view is referred as symbolic interactionism which forms the supporting structures of sociological theory. The choice of this theory was supported by the fact that the constructs of

this theory are composed through the analysis of the situation that people find themselves in, stemming from social interaction between two or among many people, as explained in Chapter One. In this study the interaction with regard to conflict between principal and the teacher would be viewed through the lens of this theory. Symbolic interaction theory analyses society (in this case the society being the school) through people (in this case the teachers who have had conflicts) who give their subjective views of their experiences. This status quo is thus, maintained by these people (i.e., teachers) since these teachers express what they see and what they believe from their perspective rather than what others may see objectively (Anderson & Taylor, 2009). This premise is important in this study since the subjective meanings of the teachers who are affected by conflicts would be interpreted against the behaviour of principals and its consequences. The concepts of The Theory of Symbolic Interactionism were put together by many scholars and theorists. However, this theory is initially the brainchild of George Herbert Mead and Charles Horton Cooley. Later it was Herbert Blummer who coined the name of this theory and publicised it.

Blummer (1969) maintains that there are three pivotal aspects to this theory. They are:

- 1) *Meaning*: People react to events by internalising what it means to them and how they are affected by these events. This concept of meaning forms the hub of the theory of social interactionism.
- 2) *Language*: being the second main principal, lends itself to understanding in the minds of people by enabling them to conjure up images in their minds through symbols and interactions. These thoughts become embedded in the minds of these people. In this study the interactions between teachers and principals having conflict will be viewed. The thoughts and perceptions that are in the minds of the teachers will be given meaning to when they are interviewed.
- 3) *Thought*: being the third aspect, resides in the minds of people. These thoughts are interpreted and modified to address the issues that they are dealing with (Blummer, 1969).

This study encapsulates the above which are theoretically and methodologically applied to how teachers tend to perceive conflicts that occur between them and their principals. In so doing, this affords the researcher the opportunity to conceptualise meaning that can be derived

from principals' mistreatment of teachers. No assumptions or definitions were made about principals' mistreatment to guide or steer data collection; such a condition would have affected the teachers' personal points of views and experiences of principals' abuse (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1992; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998; Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). The constructs of The Symbolic Interaction Theory discussed above are intricately linked to this study and thus, make it appropriate for this study.

2.3. Reasons why this topic was concealed

There are several reasons why conflicts between teachers and principals have maintained a low profile. Enumerating these would help elucidate why writings and research on this topic was not embraced fully on a large scale, especially in South Africa. Field (1996, p.7) has used the term "bullying" and is of the opinion that some of the reasons for this topic not being addressed fully are:

Embarrassment: for any grown-up to admit that he or she is being bullied is to say the least, embarrassing.

Secrecy: most bullying occurs in private; as such there are no witnesses, no records and no forensic evidence. It's your word (the teachers) against theirs (the principal) and if they are in a position senior to you, which usually are the case, then the odds are stacked against you.

Fear: bullies maintain their dominance through fear. In the workplace fear means losing one's job, position, status, or livelihood. Outside the workplace, the bully's grip is maintained or strengthened by the use of intimidation and threat, both psychologically, and in some cases, physically. The latter manifests itself most often by shouting at and humiliating the victim in front of others, although physical assault is occasionally reported.

Recognition: its effects on the individual are often seen but not recognised. Symptoms, particularly of stress, are misdiagnosed, or misattributed.

Fear to take action: Colleagues are often afraid to do anything about it. They might attract the attention of the bully as well if they try to show support for the person being bullied. This kind of fear can be called secondary bullying.

Disloyalty: it is not socially acceptable to blow the whistle on another individual even when one is 99% sure of what is going on. It can be represented as disloyalty, with all

the guilt and fear which that entails. No one likes to stop a colleague, especially when the only evidence is circumstantial and anecdotal.

Ignorance: (not knowing what to do). Colleagues are paralysed both by fear and ignorance. Most educational departments have not yet extended their personnel and grievance procedures to cover bullying, and labelling at, like harassment, as a specific, clearly identifiable and unacceptable behaviour.

Cowardice: society condemns cowards, and to be seen to run away from the problem is likely to be interpreted as cowardice. In fact, cowardice is the simple resignation of one's ability to overcome adversity in the face of overwhelming odds.

Mental illness: bullying increases stress levels dramatically and the common consequences of high stress, particularly negative stress are symptoms of depression.

Hare and Wyatt (1997) are of the opinion that society contributes to the negation of the fact that work abuse exists in any work environment. This they maintain is done through the media. They are also of the opinion that the denial of the mistreatments stigmatises the person who is abused.

Graves (2013), reports that people immediately associate the word conflict in schools to take place between learners or their parents with the principal. Conflicts that occur between teachers and principals are rarely heard of by the public.

Horwitz (2008, p.1) who is the president of the National Association for the Prevention of Teacher Abuse (NAPTA) on reviewing the book "Breaking the Silence" by Blase and Blase comments that they did not believe that there would be anyone who would research so extensively and write so frankly to expose conflicts between teacher and principal and its detrimental effects it has on teachers. She goes on to explain that abuse tends to remain a secret until people really try to bring it to the fore. She believes and emphasises that principals display of such authoritarianism in situations of conflicts is simply expressed to reveal the power they wield for their benefit (Horwitz, 2008). She explains that conflicts remain a secret also from the relevant authorities, for example, the superintendents of education, the staff representatives and the unions who are some of the people who can put a stop to such demeaning behaviours of principals. Attempts that were made by teachers to expose such behaviours were met with scepticism, resulting in the teachers being labelled as trouble makers, nutcases thus, leading to their sanity being doubted.

Anderson very forthrightly shares similar sentiments as Horwitz above, where in his forward to the book by Blase and Blase he points to the fact that conflict situations have not been exposed and there is no challenge from anyone and that the public and professionals are silent about these matters (Anderson cited in Blase & Blase, 2003). The events are so stark that people do not want to believe that such heinous occurrences can be conceived and this, lends itself not to be exposed. This is what makes it so destructive since the teacher who experiences conflicts imbibes a feeling of helplessness. (Horwitz, 2008).

NAPTA is an organisation that is made up of abused teachers who have documented their outrageous accounts of teacher abuse by principals. They have discovered that bullying is not skin deep and that they have collated enough evidence to verify such malpractices that occur in so many schools.

Schnall (2009) interviewed a teacher from Augusta, Maine, who was so distressed by conflicts that occurred between her and her principal and superintendent that she preferred being anonymous but wanted her grievances to be made public since she believed that such demeaning behaviours by principals has gone on unbeknown for a considerable period of time.

Principals of schools are afraid to be exposed of incidents of abuse, mistreatment, bullying and conflicts because they fear consequences of interrogation by their supervisors from the Department and union officials and the subsequent consequences of publicity.

Hoyle (1986, p. 87) refers to conflicts, mistreatments and bullying of teachers by principals and advises that conflicts between teachers and principals are ignored and the result is that schools are consequently run poorly. He argues that while many of us have learned to recognise the signs of abuse in marriage and families, with the exception of sexual abuse, workplace abuse has gone largely unexamined. He also notes that what is more disturbing is the silence and lack of support from colleagues and families (Hoyle, 1986).

All of the above descriptions of non- disclosure of conflicts between teachers and principals confirm the hermetic seal that existed over the cover of blanket that results in concealing

conflicts and its effects on teachers and teaching and learning not being revealed. The literature reviews on the effects of conflicts on teachers and teaching and learning follows.

2.4 Reasons and results of conflicts between teachers and principals and teaching and learning

A book that is a must be read by anyone venturing into the workplace after school or college and one that fortifies one about conflict, abuse, mistreatment and bullying is; *Work Abuse- How to Recognise and Survive It* by Hare and Wyatt (1997). Many profound statements are made by these authors who are also both licensed psychotherapists in San Francisco. They opine that affliction of any type whether verbal, physiological or psychological, conflict is traumatic for the person. Any organisation that is authoritarian and schools are no exception; people who are in control in the upper echelon of management continue to have conflicts with their subordinates since these people tend to deny the existence of conflicts and do not acknowledge it. According to the University of Michigan Institute for Social Researcher's statistics, 95% of all work organisations are authoritarian. They further state that someone known will be victimised on the job by maligning supervisors. They believe that work abuse is so prevalent that learners who come out of school are totally unaware of such occurrences at the work place.

Hare and Wyatt explain that there are four categories of work abuse that exist. *Neglectful or on-going abuse* takes place when employees' basic needs are not fulfilled or they are blamed for airing these. On-going abuse takes place continuously among the other three types of work abuse.

The second type is *chronic scapegoating* which implies that a single person is targeted for victimisation by the group. This person becomes the target for the group to vent their feelings. If the targeted person leaves the company, another victim is chosen. In schools it is often noticed by many educators that the principal targets teachers who enter the school for the first time (Hare & Wyatt, 1997).

The third type is *acute scapegoating*. In this case if a person's behaviour is not congruent with that of the group's, he becomes the target of abuse. This comes to a stop when the victim resigns from the company. In schools, besides an authoritarian principal, deputy principals

and heads of departments target new teachers entering the profession to impress their superiors. Teachers who are vociferous and express their rights and viewpoints end up in conflict with the principals. The research also reveals that principals are often authoritarian and prefer to run a school according to their parochial vision. Any teacher who makes adverse comments or gives alternate suggestions which are not in line with the thinking of a conceited principal becomes a target of abuse and the result is conflict between teachers and principals. Conflicts that are not resolved results in denial of due process.

The fourth categorisation is *denial of due process* which refers to prevention or sabotaging resolution of conflicts by the employer. (Hare & Wyatt, 1997). In schools, although the Department of Education is the employer, the principal may be viewed as a representative of the department. Most work compounded conflicts are cases which lead to conflicts not being resolved and the victim being continued to be harassed.

Two reasons compel managers to abuse subordinates according to Hare and Wyatt (1997): One being pressure from superiors while the other is expressions of vindictiveness. These authors attribute these characteristics being reared from childhood, being maintained during adolescence and manifesting itself in adulthood. They describe two instances of shame that employees become victims of. One is *depriving shame* where the manager was not validated or supported when he was a child. This condition of shame is built up to an extent that results in the child developing a sense of not being worthy of anything (Hare & Wyatt, 1997). *Punishing shame* is the second type. These authors explain that the cause is that during childhood these people were constantly and adamantly corrected. They elaborate that shame and self-worth become motivating forces to vie for the upper rungs of the ladder in an organisation. They use these means to place themselves on the pedestal of status of society which makes them enjoy a status superior to everyone else.

One of the very serious results of conflict for teachers is mental illness. The authors, Hare and Wyatt (1997), are of the opinion that denial of workplace results in much mental illness which is rife amidst the mental health group of people. They elucidate that they attribute such phenomena to psychiatrists and therapists colluding with managers of corporations. These psychiatrists report the workplace as being normal and hence, they place the blame on the employees. They also maintain that few psychiatrists realise that most organisations being authoritarian results in serious mental illness.

Hare and Wyatt have researched and produced evidence to support work abuse being symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders (PTSD) in people who are affected by conflicts. Kinchin (2005) describes PTSD as a normal reaction in emotion stemming from an experience affecting the mind. The effects are; inability to sleep, inhibited loss of memory, being unable to concentrate, hyper vigilance, expressions of experiences of shock reactions, being hypersensitive, panic attacks, irritability leading to violent outbursts, muscle and joint pains, feelings of anxiety and being nervous. A survey by Schnall (2009) among 500 teachers in Chicago Public Schools revealed that most of these teachers who were involved in a conflict with the principal or was being bullied, suffered from some or more of the above illnesses. Her book is an anthology of anecdotal accounts of teachers who have been mistreated verbally, psychologically and in some cases physically. All or any one of these mistreatments cause stress in a person.

The body responds to stress many different ways, some of which are; getting sick very often, experiencing persistent mild to severe headaches, body aches, pains and irritability. It may be that many serious illnesses and disorders, especially those linked to the nervous systems or immune system are also activated either by stress or the sudden release from stress (Field, 1996). He explains further that if the victim does not seek professional help, then the body's ultimate reaction is predictable. The brain which is the principal bearer of stress, reaches the point where it has had enough, and mental breakdown occurs. A consequence of such breakdown is reactive depression, from which recovery takes months, and often years. In serious cases, where professional help is not sought, or the diagnosis is inappropriate, the person never fully recovers (Kinchin, 2005).

Field's (1996) empirical study has revealed that teachers who are bullied take the stress home with them. Some overtly pass it onto the family while others try desperately to keep it to themselves. This act of suppression ironically makes things worse, both for the individual and the family. He asserts that it is likely that bullying represents a major cause of family break-ups.

Field (1996) revealed in his study that conflicts destroy a person to such an extent and is so devastating that one loses interest in work which could lead to loss of a person's job. His research also reveals that the person's rights, trust, confidentiality, loyalty, and freedom are

but some of the other characteristics of a person that are adversely affected. Any infliction of any one of the foregoing aspect by a principal against a teacher becomes a source of fire that can flame up a conflict. Unfortunately conflict between two people normally drives a wedge in the relationships and cordiality. As such this could lead to animosity and in some cases hatred. Field (1996) cites two professions that are most badly affected by bullying are teaching and nursing (closely followed by social services). In addition to the causes outlined above, these occupations have both a keen vocational element and a strongly hierarchical management structure. When the skills of the latter are inadequate to manage the former in terms of expectations and performance, the potential for conflict is high. Field (1996) maintains that conflicts that occur often can be viewed as a form of *psychological rape* because of the nature of violence and that the affected person experiences internal physiological and psychological discomfort.

Principals who are guilty of the above are short-sighted in realising the consequences which could be high absenteeism, high staff turnover, low morale, poor productivity, and rupturing of an often excellent rapport that exists between teachers and learners. Blase and Kirby (2008) highlight the topic of conflicts between teachers and principals have not been researched by writers who conduct research in the field of education. They reveal information about conflicts being recurring problem in schools that affect the professional careers of teachers and themselves as human beings. They further explain that the effects of conflicts are carried into the classroom and affect the effective delivery of a lesson to learners. They maintain that with time and the continuance of conflicts, the culture of the school is finally destroyed and the collegiality among staff diminishes. These authors express surprise that such treacherous conduct by principals do not surface in the media, thus remaining as an elusive problem. The resultant effects of conflicts between teachers and principals are that the teachers' morale and delivering of lessons in the classroom reaches its ebb, the culture of the school is annihilated, and learning does not flourish among learners and the general level of life enjoyed by all declines. Namie and Namie (2009) also agree with the above authors and they have revealed in their research that conflicts result in lowering of self-esteem, motivation, expressing feelings of ineffectiveness inability to counteract and respond to the problem. The problem of unhappiness at the workplace among numerous people is attributed to stress, burnout, being evasive of the conflicts that occur and denying of same. They also are of the opinion that managers deny the on goings of abuse, since they consider such treatment as the way the world works.

Kessel, who was a participant in Schnall's (2009) research, recalls horrific and unbelievable inflictions recalled by other participants. Their recollection emphasises the fact that conflicts between principals and teachers as well as learners occur on a daily basis. They cited daily incidents of staff as well as learners being harassed by school principals and these teachers were able to talk freely since they were protected through anonymity and from fear of retribution.

Internationally, researchers have produced evidence of various types of mistreatment at workplaces including principals not being *civil* (Anderson & Pearson, 1999), teachers being *mobbed* by principals (Davenport, Schwartz & Elliot, 1999; Leymann, 1990), teachers being *bullied* (Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996; Namie & Namie, 2000), principals *harassing* teachers (Bjorkvist, Esterman, & Hjelt, 1994), teachers experiencing *petty tyranny* from principals (Ashforth, 1994), principals being *abusively disrespectful* (Hornstein, 1996), principals being *unjust* with teachers (Harlos & Pinder, 2000), principals *emotionally abusing* teachers (Keashly, 1998), principal *mistreating* (Folger, 1993; Price-Spratlen, 1995), principals *abusing* especially female teachers (Bassman, 1992), principals displaying *aggression* towards teachers (Neuman & Baron, 1998), principals being *deviant* towards teachers (Robinson & Bennett, 1995) and teachers being *victimised* by principals (Swedish National Board of Occupation Safety and Health, 1993). From a comprehensive review of the workplace mistreatment / abuse literature, Keashly (1998) has crucible all of the above terms in expressing these as *emotional abuse*. Most principals emotionally abuse teachers just so that the teachers comply uncompromisingly with the principal without any retaliation (Blase & Blase, 2003).

Field (1996, p. 1), on the other hand uses the term "bully" to describe "a range of behaviours from a persistent unwillingness to recognise performance, loyalty and achievement, to repeated critical remarks and humiliating and overtly hostile behaviour such as shouting at an employee in front of colleagues." He further explains that principals tend to experience an internal sense of satisfaction from bullying teachers owing to their inability to solve problems amicably relating to their job description. They resort to such behaviour for their own gratification. In serious cases, bullies may resort to crime, such as fraud, to get rid of or embarrass people into leaving. The above claim can be substantiated in the account that follows.

One of the most serious cases of abuse that the researcher had come across is the case of two teachers who were murdered, one of whom was a deputy principal. This article was published in the SowetanLIVE dated the 26/03/2007. It is alleged that the principal of a primary school and the chairman of the School's Governing Body hired two hit men to murder these two teachers in the Natal North Coast area. Apparently, the principal and the chairman of the School's Governing Body were involved in corruption, from mismanagement of school fund and the feeding scheme to the irregular hiring of teachers. The two teachers who taught at the school were going to expose them and had gone missing for more than a week. Their bodies were found in shallow graves near the school (Masuku, 2007).

Blase and Blase (2003) have researched abuse that are not verbal, such as continuous menacing stares, being aloof, nonchalant, ignoring teachers (who are treated as subordinates), not greeting teachers, expecting the teachers to greet them first, being snobbish and arrogant and last but not least ignoring teachers. Physically, principals resort to slamming the table, pointing of the finger when conversing in an argumentative tone, yelling, shouting, screaming at the top of their voice, engaging in writing of unfair criticism in work performances, overloading the teacher with excessive allocations (including co-curricular and extra-curricular duties), making sexual undertones to female teachers, spreading unfair rumours and gossiping behind the teachers' backs (Lombardo & McCall, 1984; Leyman, 1990; Ryan & Oestreich, 1991; Davenport et al., 1991; Bjokvist et al., 1994; Keashly, Trott & MacLean, 1994; Robinson & Benett, 1995; Hornstein, 1996; Neuman & Baron, 1998; Harlos & Pinder, 2000; Namie & Namie, 2000).

Blase and Blase (2003) have from their empirical research, categorised principals' behaviours according to three levels of aggressions. They refer to level 1 as, not being to the teacher direct but moderately aggressive. Level 2 is more direct and with an increase in aggression and level 3 as being direct and very aggressive. The harm caused by principals varied from teacher to teacher and the implication is that the harm caused by Level 1 Principal Mistreatment does not necessarily mean it is less than that when compared to Level 2 or Level 3 behaviours. The results of abuse and consequent conflicts between teacher and principal, measured according to the above three levels, in the above study revealed a number of harmful effects on teachers in terms of their physiological, psychological and physical well-being. Teachers recounted some of the effects on their health being affected as insomnia (not being able to sleep well), experiencing nightmares and not having rested fully which resulted

in their performance in the class being affected. The teachers also experienced frequent headaches, backaches, fatigue, becoming ill more often, cardiac arrests, skin disorders, suffering from ulcers, drug abuse and in some cases, suicide.

A Washington educator cited in Long (2012) recalled that her condition was so bad that her doctor put her on medical leave for severe depression and anxiety. Had it not been for her family and daughter, she mentioned that she would have committed suicide. A female participant in Horwitz's (2008) book recounted how the principal squeezed her arm which became black and blue for coming 15 minutes late to school. The principal after inflicting the physical abuse reminded her not to be late again.

Psychological and emotional outcomes that were reported by teachers were: feeling depressed, angry, experiencing feelings of guilt, feeling helpless, not being able to concentrate, and lowering of self-esteem, experiencing panic attacks and PTSD. Participants with regard to work related issues reported that they were: demotivated to give off their best in the classroom, lacked commitment, withdrew from curricular and co-curricular activities and got absent frequently. The social effects recounted were: wanting to be alone, lack of collegiality, social life with friends and family life being disrupted (Lombardo & McCall, 1984; Leyman, 1990; Ryan & Oestreich, 1991; Davenport et al., 1991; Bjorkvist et al., 1994, Keashly et al., 1994; Hornstein, 1996; Harlots & Pinder, 2000; Namie & Namie, 2000; Parsons, 2005). Besides the infliction on teachers, conflict between teachers and principals yielded other affects such as damaged relationships, impaired decision-making processes and damaged classrooms.

Relationships that were affected:

Teachers, who were once committed to delivering the goods in and outside the classroom, were not able to do so to the best of their ability. Innovative teachers who focused on learning areas tended to absolve themselves from doing so. The zeal, enthusiasm and initiative were lowered. Teachers expressed reluctance in engaging in school events. At meetings they did not make any inputs or any meaningful contribution. They did not get any support from their colleagues. It was clear that some who did show some support only paid lip service. There was no longer a robust rapport among staff members. Damaged relationships were a common trend that ran through all afflicted teachers.

Impaired Decision-Making

Teachers in the study used terms such as: authoritarian, dictatorial and tyrant, to describe abusive principals. Debby who was cited in Schnall (2009), recounted how if a teacher skipped even an irrelevant meeting, coined the phrase “hell has no fury like a principal scorned” (Debby cited in Schnall, 2009). Data presented by participants who participated in the study by Blase and Blase (2003) reported that principals were not democratic but rather autocratic in making decisions. At staff meetings, the principal did all the talking and teachers were intimidated to toe the line. Principals did not want any changes in the way they ran the school. Negative comments were used to instil compliance from teachers.

Damaged Classrooms

Most teachers who had conflicts with principals stated that there was a decline in the interaction between teachers and learners (Blase & Blase, 2003). Schnall (2009) empirically proved that the principals’ behaviour and leadership abilities are directly related to both teacher effectiveness and learner achievement. Bad principals negatively affected teacher’s morale, mental, emotional and physical health, and their ability to function optimally in the classroom, thereby having a negative impact on learners. Good principals enhanced teacher effectiveness and had a positive effect on learners. Teachers, who participated in the above studies and had conflicts with the principals, generally expressed being stressed, feeling insecure, being less motivated to teach in the classroom. Teachers were forced to use the chalk and talk method of teaching. Any innovative thought and practice were renegaded. Teachers were monitored as to how they maintained discipline in the classroom. Hence, teachers became impersonal to the learners which resulted in them less caring, less tolerant and being impatient (Blase & Blase, 2003).

Schall (2009, p. 15) opines that if proper conduct is sacrificed for political or personal gain on the part of ineffective and or abusive school principals, schools deteriorate. Teachers explained in her study how poorly run schools are linked to decline in education standards and the result is learners leaving the school to enter the world of work, not being in a position to take on the responsibilities of how an adult should function (Schall, 2009). Research conducted by Salleh and Adulpakdee (2012) at Islamic Secondary Schools in Yala, Thailand,

on conflict between principals and teachers, however, revealed that the consequences experienced by teachers were not as severe as those expressed by the American and United Kingdom authors. The reason for this was that the causes of conflict were issues pertaining to factors that related merely the way in which the school was run and personally, the collegiality among the staff members. These differences were amicably resolved internally at school. These authors believe that controlling and resolving conflicts in schools results in an improvement of teaching and learning that ensues in the classroom (Salleh & Adulpakdee, 2012). Runde and Flanagan (2008), assert that conflict could be the source of excellent ideas on the one hand while on the other hand, it could lead to failures. The participants of their study highlighted how conflict had worsened relations, collegiality and team work in their schools thereby affecting the performance of the learners (Runde & Flanagan, 2008).

Martinez (2004, p. 32) represents a school's success in a triangle as represented in (Fig. 1).

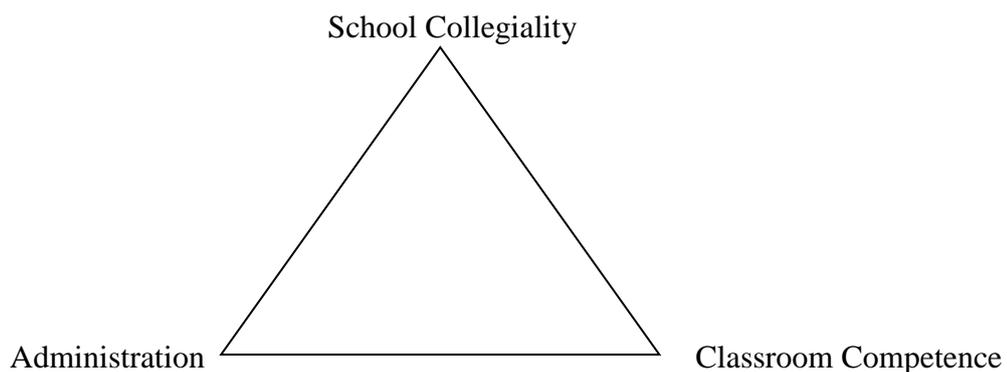


Fig. 1: Martinez's Triangle of Collegiality

She contends that in a collegial school environment teachers are able to manage conflicts with everyone, including learners and their parents (Martinez, 2004). This study will try to establish how important collegiality is, if it exists between principals and teachers in particular and hence an indirect indicator to performance in the classroom by teachers and learners.

Tesfay's (2002) research on conflict between teachers and principals in Addis Ababa also revealed that the consequences of the conflict for the teacher were not detrimental to the health and well-being of the teacher to an extreme end as discussed earlier. The trivial nature of the common sources of conflict that were identified were communication, poor work environment, out-dated rules and directives and the incompetence of principals to deal with conflicts. Methods that were, therefore, applied in trying to resolve conflicts were forcing

method which had the highest frequency, while compromising and avoiding method followed (Tesfay, 2002).

The empirical case study of 4 schools in Masvingo, Zimbabwe, by Makaye and Ndofirepi (2012) indicated that in these schools 69% of the teacher participants affirmed that the principals were the source of conflicts. The majority of the participants indicated that unequal allocation of resources as the major source of conflict, these being classrooms, accommodation and stationery. Although, these conflicts were frequent these were resolved internally at schools and the effect on teachers did not tantamount to physical or emotional injury that had serious repercussions on them. These authors maintain that conflicts results in communication breakdown thus affecting the smooth running of the school. There were reports of principals actually physically fighting with teachers over certain issues. They, hence, deduce that the culture of the school is disturbed and the teachers and learners are negatively affectedly (Makaye & Ndofirepi, 2012).

Makibi's findings in his research on conflict and conflict management in sixteen selected primary schools in Lesotho revealed conflicts between principals and teachers that were more verbal over issues of lack of resources, gossip, classroom space and teachers views on aspects of policy making which was largely guided by intervention by leaders of religious organisations like churches. For example, female learners who are pregnant are expelled whereas the male learner who is the father of the child could continue to be in school to continue with his studies. Teachers felt that gender inequality was being practiced and raised the issue with the school principal. However, although the Lesotho government has addressed gender inequalities, school management and church elders draw on their cultural beliefs to make their own decisions (Makibi, 2010). However, teachers engaged in verbal fights and in some cases physical fights in the presence of learners. Teachers were subjected to unjust cultural practices through cultural imperialism. The majority of the conflicts were resolved internally at schools while some principals engaged the intervention of church priests in solving conflicts (Makibi, 2010).

Literature reviews nationally (Ngcongco, 1992; Hlatshwayo, 1996; Jonkman, 2006; Snodgrass & Blunt, 2009; Mayiwa, 2011; Msila, 2012) reveal other aspects of conflicts such as conflict management, conflict resolutions and teacher attrition but not on the topic of the researcher. Writings on the topic of the researcher seem to be very limited and hence this research to fill

the gap. Jonkman (2006) had established in his study that disputes in school bring vulnerable moments of fear and anxiety to both educators and learners. Masila's (2012) research revealed that principals were incompetent in resolving conflicts. Participants in this study showed that it was crucial for them to develop conflict competence to be able to deal with conflict situations in their schools. This is more applicable to principals. They further highlighted how conflict had worsened relations, collegiality and teamwork in their schools. Some principals pointed out that they were not competent enough to deal with conflict. They attributed the lack of competency to be lack of training or induction when they were appointed as school principals. Their schools are usually in dire straits during times of conflicts because they utilise instincts rather than expertise to deal with conflict (Msila, 2012). The above facts paint a clearer picture of the reality with regard to the predicament and dilemma teachers are placed in, who are affected and afflicted by conflict that cannot be resolved by some incompetent principals.

Snodgrass and Blunt (2009) assert that unmanaged conflict can create dysfunctional schools which deprive learners of their rights to citizenship through free and equal education. These authors also point out that constitutional values, embedded in the constitution of the Republic of South Africa, such as human dignity and equality cannot be attained in an atmosphere and context where conflict is endemic. This study will be significant in that it wants to expose how challenging and difficult socially and physically it is for teachers to cope who have experienced conflicts with their principals.

2.5 Chapter summary

This chapter included the theory that helped frame this study. It has reviewed international and national literature on conflict between teacher and principal. Focusing on the aspects of the effects of conflicts on teachers and teaching and learning, help reveal the limited literature nationally and hence the gap for this study. Reasons as to why this topic was not expounded extensively, the results of conflicts on teachers and teaching and learning were reviewed. The literature review showed that the extent of the effect of conflicts were wide and severe in the American States and the United Kingdom. In Asian and African countries as well as nationally, the severity of effects of conflicts between teachers and principals, comparatively it seems is not as damaging and intense as compared to the United States and United Kingdom. The review also helps highlight the fact that this topic was garmented under a cloak

of silence. What is important is that the severity of the results of conflicts on teachers and teaching and learning is related in detail as recorded and discussed by various authors and their participants. Through the method of purposeful sampling, snowballing and on line services, under a blanket of anonymity, participants were able to express the atrocities and its devastating effects by principals on teachers. This helps to substantiate the objectives of this study. It is envisaged by the researcher that the objectives of this study are achieved, although on a small scale, considering the environment in which he teaches.

The methodology and the research method for the study will be focused upon in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the literature review on conflicts between teachers and principals, the effects on teachers and teaching and learning. The theoretical framework that underpinned this study was also discussed. Other factors, such as why this topic was concealed, the recourse teachers have, and the various avenues open to them could not be left out since these are intricately related to the topic. This chapter presents the methodological choices made in exploring the research questions of this study, as set out in Chapter One. It begins by discussing the research paradigm and design, the methodology used, sample and sampling procedure, recording of data, data analysis, trustworthiness, ethical issues and limitations pertaining to the study.

3.2 Research design

The researcher in this study made use of the interpretive paradigm design. Mouton's (2001) definition of a research design is a plan or blueprint for the researcher which he uses in conducting research. The method that the researcher chooses depends on the paradigm that the researcher is working in, also the type of information or knowledge the researcher is looking for, the manner in which this is planned to be obtained and how it will be discussed and analysed. This is referred to as the appropriateness for the purpose (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). This refers to incorporating the aspects of the method, the paradigm, research of data and data analysis. Painter, Durrheim & TerreBlanche (2006) state that a research design bridges the research questions with the implementation of the research.

The study is located within the interpretive paradigm since the researcher wants to know and understand the effects of conflict between teacher and principal on teachers and teaching and learning. In other words, the study sought to understand the social life, the social and work environment realities and the effects of conflicts on teachers and teaching and learning (Mouton, 2001; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011).

Taylor and Bogdan (1998) state that by using qualitative research methods the researcher is afforded the opportunity to delve into the participant's natural surroundings, by viewing them from what they say, do and from the perspective of how the participants understand the events that unfold around them. This is a social constructivist approach, emphasising the role of interpretation in the way people constitute their reality (Berger & Luckman, 1967). A constructivist approach which is important for conflict is symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1969). The theory of symbolic interactionism was dealt with in chapter 2. This theory posits that people construct their beliefs about the world from social interaction modified by interpretation, and these beliefs constitute the basis for their actions (Anderson & Taylor, 2009). The significance of this perspective for conflict is that conflict is seen to reside in the mind of the person who perceives it, rather than the person who has caused it (Anderson & Taylor, 2009). Therefore, to obtain first-hand information on conflict one needs to work with the perceptions of those who experience the conflict. Hence, the participants of this study and other studies conducted internationally (Schnall, 1998; Blase & Blase, 2003; Namie & Namie, 2009; Msila, 2012), are teachers who have had conflicts with principals. The scenario thus lends itself to use a qualitative methodology, which was decided by the researcher, since this study is located within the interpretative research paradigm.

3.3 Methodology

This study was conducted through qualitative research methodology. Qualitative research methodology was appropriate for this study because the researcher wanted to hear anecdotal accounts from the participants. Denzil and Lincoln (1994) mention that in qualitative research, data are gathered from the natural setting, and the researcher interviews and observe the participants in their own environments. As such, Interpretivist perspective is based on the assumption that human life can only be understood from within and therefore focuses on people's subjective experiences (Maree, 2007). In this study the experiences of each of the participants will be studied to glean information on the experiences of teachers who have had conflicts with principals and the effects on teaching and learning.

To generate data in this study one method was used, namely: semi-structured interviews. In as much as the researcher has a set of questions that guides him through the interview, semi-structured interview allows the researcher to accommodate deviations that the participants may want to add which may not be in the list of questions of the researcher. This qualification

affords the researcher the liberty to add on further questions or remove as he deems fit and necessary in order to probe and elicit more information from the participants (Henning, Van Rensburg, & Smit, 2004). This method was chosen since the researcher wanted to understand the participants' points of view rather than making generalisation about their behaviour. This method also afforded the researcher the platform to gain insight into specific issues and to probe the areas from the participants' responses that the researcher had very little prior knowledge of. The questions were classified with references to acknowledging conflicts that participants had with their principals, whether these were minor or major conflicts, the effects these conflicts had on the participants and teaching and learning. There were six participants from four schools in total.

The advantage of semi-structured interviews is that it enabled probing and clarification of issues. Semi-structured interviews afforded the researcher the forum to gather rich descriptive data from a few participants who have the knowledge of the phenomenon (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). I preferred to use the interview method to get a detailed picture and to explore the understanding of the beliefs and perceptions of my participants who have had conflicts with principals. The one-on-one allows face-to-face interaction between the researcher and the participant in order to facilitate access to the participant's life experiences as given in their own words (Flick, 2006; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). Seidman (1998, p.4) agrees with Cohen, Manion, & Morrison (2007) with reference to interviewing which allows for access to the context of peoples' behaviour. By getting closer to the participants the researcher is able to know their perceptions, experiences and interpretations of conflicts which they had with principals. The one-to-one semi-structured interview is a type of qualitative approach which allows for flexibility during the interview process (Henning, van Rensburg, & Smith, 2004). This allows the researcher to add on questions for clarification and elucidation. Adding on probing questions afforded the researcher the opportunity to explore and collect contextual and in-depth information regarding conflicts and its effects on teachers and teaching and learning (Adlar & Clark, 2003; Patton, 2003; Flick, 2006). These assisted participants to reconstruct their perception, experiences and interpretations. The interview process allows the researcher to ask probing questions in order to get clarification or elaboration of incomplete answers (Neuman & Baron, 1998).

3.4 Sample and sampling procedures

The participants were selected through purposive sampling. This type of sampling can be referred to as judgemental sampling or theoretical sampling, which can be classified as a type of non-probability sampling which the researcher considers for his research, regarding participants (Brink, 2000). The researcher has the experience of teaching for 34 years, 23 years of which he taught in the location in which this study is based. Merriam (1998) substantiates that use of purposeful sampling affords the researcher to obtain an in-depth understanding from participants from whom it is possible to obtain the most amount of information. She also advises that it is, therefore, important to select rich cases for in-depth study. The researcher is in contact with the participants who have experienced conflicts with principals and is thus able to locate his participants purposefully. The 6 participants are from 4 secondary schools, 3 of which are in close proximity to each other (approximately 5km. apart); the fourth school is a combined school approximately 10km. from the city centre. The staffs of these schools are comprised predominantly of Indians and few African teachers. Furthermore, the researcher chose participants from these schools because the schools and the participants were not too distant, hence reducing the cost of travelling since this study was solely funded by the researcher.

3.5 Recording the data

The researcher had taken cognisance of the fact that the study dealt with issues that are personal, and which could result in the participants becoming emotional. Van Manen (1990) emphasises that one of the ways of generating data of personal experience is to have recorded conversations. All the interviews were audio recorded because when conducting interview, the interviewer is faced with multiple situations to pay attention to. Digital voice recorder allows a comprehensive and detailed record rather than notes taken during the interview (Smit, 2003). Interview on audio recorder may also be replayed as soon as necessary for complete and objective interpretation at a later stage. Furthermore, the tone of the voice, and emotional impact of the responses are preserved by the recorder equipment. Use of the recorder allows for a complete and accurate recording of the participants' exact words. Audio recording provided time for important aspects in an interview like the non-verbal behaviours, for examples, for facials expressions and gestures that were observed to be noted. Digital audio recording afforded the researcher the opportunity to replay and validate the data. The

above process was used by the researcher and all process of recording and transcriptions were done by the researcher. This was presented to my supervisor for purposes of verification.

Prior to the interview permission was sought from the participants to audio record the interview. Participants were informed that recording the discussion was only a means to ensure accuracy of the content of the discussion and that it was not for any other purpose besides the purpose of the research and also that no other person, beside my supervisor, would have access to the recorded information. They were also assured that subsequent to transcription a copy would be handed to them to authenticate the recording.

The interviews were conducted during school breaks and after school at different venues which suited the participants. The researcher was mindful of the fact that teaching time was not compromised. Each interview took about 45 minutes to an hour depending on how quick and lengthy the participant was in answering the questions. Seidman (1998) is of the opinion that an hour is a fair amount of time in carrying out an interview. Furthermore, De Vos (2002) posits that the success of the interview depends on the interviewer's competence in asking questions. The researcher discussed with his supervisor to fine tune and prioritised the questions prior to the interviews.

After each interview transcriptions were taken from the digital voice recorder. The researcher ensured that immediate recency affords the opportunity of detailing in the transcripts all behaviours of the participants during the interview. The transcriptions are needed for repeated readings in the discourse analysis (Bueman & Parker, 1993). Reading and writing transcripts is helpful as it familiarises the researcher as he constantly goes over the writings.

3.6 Data analysis

Halliday's (2007) definition of data analysis states that the data analysed has to make sense and information about what is being said has to be obtained. Data from the semi-structured interview and critical incidents were analysed qualitatively (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). According to Nieuwenhuis (2007), qualitative data when analysed inductively produces research findings from aspects that are salient and immediately relevant in raw data.

In order to process the data so that patterns of meaning could emerge, the data that were generated from the interviews were transferred from the digital voice recorder to my computer which then allowed me to manually transcribe them. The transcriptions were then printed and read in detail. The reading afforded the opportunity to note similarities and differences, identifying patterns and drawings on themes that surfaced from the data. These themes were elaborated upon in detail in Chapter 4. Thematic analysis was used to identify core themes from the transcribed interviews. Thematic analysis describes the process by which the researcher identifies codes from qualitative information (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). The broad categories of constructs that were identified which related to conflict between teacher and principal were physical and psychological effects on the teacher, social isolation from colleagues, family and friends, the different types of conflicts, how conflicts were resolved and how conflicts affected teaching and learning. What also emerged is that conflict is eminent from principals who adopt the dictatorial or an autocratic style of leadership. The theoretical framework acted as a guide during the data analysis (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011).

3.7 Trustworthiness

Morse (1994) asserts that in qualitative research the terms validity and reliability refer to the trustworthiness of the research. She advises that qualitative research without *ensuring rigour* is worthless. Lincoln and Guba (1985) maintain that trustworthiness can be internally validated, (i.e., from the researcher's perspective), through four aspects: Credibility, Transferability, Dependability and Confirmability. These authors maintain that these constructs lend themselves to qualify rigour in terms of categorisation, confirming of results by participants and peer academic contributions of checking and advice. How these aspects are catered for in this study is explained in the four aspects of categorisation below.

3.7.1 Credibility

Lincoln and Guba (1985) maintain that ensuring credibility is imperative in establishing trustworthiness. They elaborate that credibility refers to what the researcher is reporting is truthful and correct. The researcher in this research, by employing the qualitative research themes that emerged from the interviews with the participants, detailed the voices of the participants in Chapter Four, thus ensuring authenticity and correctness. Furthermore, the

limited number of only six participants made the sample of participants manageable and, hence, credible. Since the participants were voice recorded the context of the issues were maintained. Participants were encouraged to speak freely and any deviations that participants preferred were probed through added pertinent questions for the context which was possible because of the use of semi-structured interviews.

3.7.3 Transferability

Lincoln and Guba (1985) refer to transferability as the extent to which the results of the research can be applied to similar contexts. Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle (2010) clarify that judgement of transferability may be made by a reader based on the similarities of the school, policies, participants, resources, culture and other characteristics of the site of the researcher against that of the reader. These authors further substantiate that the deductions made from a qualitative undertaking are applicable to a limited number of participants and their surroundings. The researcher believes that these criteria are satisfied since only six participants, through purposeful sampling were interviewed. The detail profiling of the four schools in Chapter Four also shows the similarities in contexts as advocated by Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle (2010). Furthermore, the researcher has been teaching for 22 years in two of the four schools and is personally in touch with the participants since all four schools are in close proximity. These authors are also of the opinion that giving detailed information on context and background is important. In this study this is done in Chapter One.

3.7.3 Dependability

According to Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle (2010), dependability hinges on the collection and interpretation of the data, how the data is collected and the interpretation of the data being able to be retracted. This chapter discusses in detail the design and methodology used in achieving the objectives of this study. Dependability in this study is accentuated by detailing how the data was generated, analysed and interpreted. The above authors also advocate that a qualitative study may be classified as a good study if details are supplied about how the data are generated and analysed. The interviews were recorded through a voice recorder. These authors are of the opinion that extensive use is made of all types of recording apparatuses in various types of qualitative research to support dependability.

3.7.4 Confirmability

Lincoln and Guba (1985) indicate that the concept of confirmability is the qualitative researcher's concern for neutrality. Terms that are analogous and that could be coined together are objectivity and non-biasedness. In this study confirmability was ensured through checking with the participants who confirmed the interpretations that were made by the researcher. Furthermore, copies of the interview were given to the participants for verification of accuracy and authenticity of what transpired during the interviews. Shenton (2004), in this regard, advises that the researcher must take steps to make sure that the findings that are generated from the data are not descriptions and preferences of the researcher but are the results of the experiences and conjectures of the participants. The researcher ensured confirmability with regard to these aspects by discussing his findings with his supervisor as well.

3.8 Ethical issues

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) maintain that when conducting research it is important to observe ethical principles in order to pre-empt problems that may arise during fieldwork and also to protect the rights and anonymity of the participants. Ethical issues pertain to observance of rules of behaviour or moral principles which the researcher must take cognisance of prior to and during the research process, particularly with research in the social sciences (Babbie & Mouton, 2006; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Kimmel, 2007). These authors suggest that researchers have to obtain official permission from the stakeholders to conduct research. Adhering to this principle, ethical clearance was obtained from the University of KwaZulu-Natal to conduct my research. The ethical clearance number for my study is: HSS/1235/013M.

Letters of consent were written to the school principal and the participants. The letters to the participants informed them of the purpose of the study and seeking their approval to interview them. These letters clearly stated that there were neither foreseeable direct benefits nor direct risks associated with their participation in this study. The letter also informed the participants that participation was of their own accord and that they are at liberty to withdraw at any time if they so desired. Attached to these letters were declaration forms which the participants and the principals signed, giving me their consent. The participants and the principals were

informed that pseudonyms would be used throughout the study thus ensuring anonymity and confidentiality. They were further assured that storage would be under lock and key in the cupboard of the supervisor and that after a period of five years the documents would be shredded and recordings deleted. Since the participants were colleagues and well known by the researcher, a good rapport was established. They were treated with dignity and respect. The data that was generated were made available to the participants to confirm authenticity. Subsequent to all participants being satisfied with the data generated, data were then analysed.

3.9 Limitations

This study was not free from challenges. Difficulties experienced by the researcher were, postponement of interview dates, and time by participants since the interviews were conducted prior to the exam period for the learners at school. As such, during this time of the year, teachers are highly occupied with their workload and I had to reschedule to accommodate them. Another problem was being interrupted during the interview process. Since one of the interviews was conducted during the lunch break, teachers and learners interrupted us by knocking on the door and asking for the participants input on some matter relating to them. The audio recorder had to be put on pause on these occasions.

This study being a qualitative one which is undertaken on a small scale does not lend itself to generalisations. The conclusions made would stem solely from the data generated from the participants only.

3.10 Coding of schools and participants

Protecting identities of participants is important in research and one way of achieving this is to use pseudonyms (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). This ensures confidentiality and anonymity. The common practice is to use codes for names of schools and participants. The codes that were used for schools were the letters of the alphabet from A to D and the numbers 1 to 6 were used for the participants. Thus (T1; SA) referred to participant 1 from School A. These were coded in abbreviations as shown below;

(T1; SA), refers to teacher participant 1 from School A.

(T2; SA), refers to teacher participant 2 from School A.

(T3; SD), refers to teacher participant 3 from School D.

(T4; SC), refers to teacher participant 4 from School C.

(T5; SB), refers to teacher participant 5 from School B.

(T6; SA), refers to teacher participant 6 from School A.

3.11 Chapter summary

This chapter has presented the methodology and research design that was used in this study. It also discussed the research paradigm, sample and sampling procedure used. Other aspects of the data, recordings, analysis, trustworthiness, ethical issues and limitation of the study were also discussed. The next chapter focuses on the data presentation and discussion.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter the design and methodology was presented that was used to explore the research questions of this study, as set out in Chapter One. In addition, it presented a detailed discussion of the data generation method, data analysis, ethical issues and the limitations of the study. In this chapter information gleaned from the interviews are presented and evidence to support the claims that are made is presented. Deductive analysis of the data that was generated during the interviews is presented thematically. The objectives of the study are to explore the effects of conflicts between teachers and principals on teachers and teaching and learning. The responses of the interviewees tries to answer the key questions of the experience of teachers who have had conflicts between themselves and principals under whom they had served and how it affected them and how teaching and learning was also affected.

This chapter presents the general view of the participants, providing quotes which serve as evidence leading to the general view. The application of the theoretical framework being that of the Symbolic Interaction Theory will help to surface the experiences of the participants through references of their voices. The data is first presented followed by the discussion. In the discussion, the literature and theoretical framework from Chapter Two is integrated in describing what emerges from the study. Halliday (2007) advises that the discussion of the data has three key elements. The first element is the argument, which the author perceives as a major driving force of the data discussion. The second element is the data extract (*verbatim quotes*) from the corpus which when strategically deployed provide evidence to support the argument. The final element is the discursive commentary which tells the reader which bits of each data extracts are significant and why, showing the reader how they provide specific evidence to support the argument. Halliday (2007) continues to elucidate that overriding these elements are the themes which form the basis upon which the argument, the data extracts are significant and why, showing the reader how they provide specific evidence and discursive commentaries are organised, providing headings and stages in the argument. The use of first person separates the researcher's agenda from other voices in the text, thus increasing transparency and accountability (Halliday, 2007). The above discourse reflects how I intended

conducting the discussion. Themes which emerged were discussed and resulting conclusions were drawn in Chapter Five. A preamble to the above, which would be befitting, would be the profiling of the schools or the research sites and its constituents which would provide the perception of the environment.

4.2 Profiles of the schools

School A is situated among majority of the people who fall into low income earners. Boarding this principally Asiatic community are two predominantly African townships where people earn a meagre income and thus find it difficult to make ends meet. These financial facts impacts on the school since most of the learners, hence, do not pay the school fees. The quintile ranking of 4 implies extra teachers and extra funding for the school. Despite these financial constraints School A is now classified as a “model” school, a status which is achieved if a pass rate of 100% is obtained for three years in succession. There are 32 teachers on the staff, 5 of whom are governing body appointees, 31 of these teachers are Indians and the remaining one is of the African ethnic group. The learner population is approximately 900, comprising 85% Indians, 10% Africans, and 5% being of the Coloured community. The principal has experienced that most parents are co-operative whereas some are retaliatory. Many of the learners are beset with many social problems of divorce, being exposed to drugs and alcohol. Fortunately, the administration of the school and the staff adopt a no-nonsense approach and is able to contain the problems of drug and alcohol abuse.

School B which is approximately 5km away from School A, is surrounded by a similar environment as School A where the community is made up largely of sub-economic income. Most of the parents are unemployed and the divorce rate is high. Hence, many of the learners have single parents. The social problems of drug and alcohol abuse, as in the case of School A, prevails at School B as well. The school has a learner population of 475, 50% being Indians and 50% Africans. The parents of the latter learner population present a communication problem to the school. The staff comprises 22 educators, 21 of whom are Indian and one African. The quintile ranking of the school is 5 which imply that they receive the least funding from the Department. Since most of the learners’ parents are low income earners, most learners do not pay school fees; hence, finance is a major problem for this school. School C lies just on the outskirts of the city centre and has a learner population of 928, being made up of 50% Indians, 49% Africans and 0.25% of Coloureds and 0.75% of Whites.

50% of the learners come from far and wide, as far as 20km away. As in the case of School B, 70% of the learners come from seriously challenged background, including drugs and alcohol abuse, teenage pregnancy, and social networking. One of the biggest challenges for the teachers is learners being addicted to cell phones, over which many hours are spent. Some learners are HIV positive and quite a few are orphans who come from child-headed families. The quintile ranking of School C is 4 and at most 50% of the school fees are recovered. This school has 36 teachers and 4 School Governing Body appointees. 32 of these teachers are Indians and the remaining 4 are African teachers. Despite major setbacks with the learners this school enjoys a strong partnership with the community and business houses.

School D lies about 10km out of town and has a school learner population of 850, 85% of whom are Indians and the balance of 15% being made up of African, Coloured and Whites. This school boasts of a 100% pass rate almost every year. About 50% of the learners come from outside the area. The parents are very co-operative and are of the middle class earners. School fund sees a recovery of 80% and the quintile ranking of the school is 5 as in the case of School B, where very little finance is received from the Department. There are 33 teachers on the staff, 4 of whom are School Governing Body appointees. 32 are Indian teachers and 1 is an African teacher.

All of the above schools are secondary schools that were chosen since the researcher is an educator in a secondary school in the area and he is au fait with these schools and the staff. Having taught in the area for 23 years, the researcher was able to, through purposeful sampling, locate his participants easily. Creswell (2007) reiterates the importance of selecting the appropriate candidates for the interviews.

4.3 Themes emerging from the data

As mentioned in the previous section, the presentation of the data is organised into six themes that emerged from my conversations with research participants. The Theory of Symbolic Interactionism helped in deriving the following themes:

- (a) The nature of the teachers' experiences of their conflicts
- (b) The different types of conflicts and their sources
- (c) Strategies employed by the teacher to solve these conflicts
- (d) How teachers who had experienced conflicts were affected personally
- (e) The manner in which conflicts affected teaching and learning and

(f) Perceptions of teachers of principals and the manner in which principals ought to resolve conflicts.

The six themes are presented and discussed in the following section. The discussion of the themes includes some insights drawn from the literature consulted and the theoretical framework that underpinned the study.

4.3.1 The nature of the teachers' experiences of their conflicts

Some of the very demeaning experiences recalled by the participants were principals who employed tactics that were unprofessional. These included shouting and scolding which made the teacher feel like being treated as a child. Principals who resort to adopt this type of behaviour do so in order to subdue their victims and thus believe that they have the upper hand. This type of behaviour is tantamount to heavy handed tactics which is unprofessional. Psychologists like Hare and Wyatt (1997) confirm that people, who are unable to reason logically and, hence, express themselves coherently, tend to resort to outbursts which could be verbal, physical or both. Teacher 6 from School A recounted very clearly and tacitly his principal's unruly behaviour when he said:

He used to shout and scream and he used to become very unprofessional in encroaching on our free time and personal space. We were restricted in many respects whereas he can indulge at any time as he feels fit. (T6; SA).

The views expressed in the above extract were also shared by another teacher from the same school regarding what they viewed as the principal's unprofessional behaviour. This is what he had to say:

...and then he started shouting saying that he don't want this happening at his school and being very unprofessional, shouting, screaming he refused to accept my reasoning and that is when I also got angry as well.... (T1; SA).

T1; SA also confirmed that this principal was guilty of this conduct to all other teachers on the staff:

... I was very angry since he does it to all other educators.... (T1; SA).

The above type of behaviour among principals is definitely unbecoming and unprofessional. What some principals forget to realise is that teachers are professionals and that their communications with the staff need to be commensurate with professionalism. The problem it seems stems from the Department of Education where mentoring of principals is not provided and the necessary training is not given in dealing with conflicts with teachers. Hare and Wyatt (1997) is a husband and wife team, both licensed psychotherapists in San Francisco, and are of the opinion that conflict of any type whether verbal, emotional or physical destabilises the person who is at the receiving end of the conflict. They have concluded from their research that behaviour of this unprofessional conduct is rife in authoritarian oriented organisations.

With the implementation of the present system of choosing a candidate to fill a vacant post for promotion, the system adopted by the Department of Education is where the SGB (School Governing Body) which represents the parent sector, union representatives, other relevant observers and the principal make up the selection committee. The likely candidates are shortlisted and interviewed by the selection committee and the candidates are listed accordingly to the rated scores. However, participants noted that collusion between the principal and the committee is rife. As such the principal manipulates the process with the selection committee in order to secure the promotion for the candidate that he/she prefers for the vacant post to be filled. Another flaw of this method that has been observed is that, house maids, housewives and people who have hardly or no knowledge of the vacant post to be filled are part of the selection committee. Participants were of the opinion that teachers who have a long standing faithful service in a school should be considered for in-house promotion since they are au fait with the running of the school rather than the vacant post being filled by a candidate from another school.

In Chapter Two the four types of work abuse as advocated by Hare and Wyatt (1997) were discussed, these being: neglectful or on-going abuse, chronic scapegoating, acute scapegoating and denial of due process. They explain that neglectful or on-going abuse occurs when employees' basic needs do not materialise or they are blamed for expressing these needs. An example of this first type: neglectful or on-going abuse was experienced by T3; SD who was teaching for 33 years and his colleagues who were senior teachers as well were not short listed for promotion. T3; SD was very disgruntled as he recalled saying:

It was regarding about short listing for promotion at the previous high school where all the senior teachers were not short listed, that I found was a serious disagreement with the principal. (T3; SD).

This clearly is an example of the need for aspiration in terms of promotion which was not fulfilled by T3; SD. The second and third type of work abuse listed by Hare and Wyatt (2007, p.1) are “chronic scapegoating” and “acute scapegoating.” Incidents of scapegoating were experienced by T3; SD and T1; SA. In the case of T3; SD, with reference to the same aspect of promotion mentioned above, the principal placed the blame on the governing body:

... eh... he actually passed on the blame to the governing body, but I hold him, as a CEO (Chief Executive Officer) on the plant, to be chiefly responsible for the staff, so I hold him personally accountable. (T3; SD).

The concept of chronic scapegoating propounded by Hare and Wyatt (2007), refers to one person being chosen as a target for everyone to vent their negative feelings to. If the victim resigns from the company, another person is chosen as a target. T1; SA and T4; SC confirmed the above when T1; SA was accused of the wrong done by another teacher on the staff. He very vehemently recounted that:

...the principal had problems with another educator and in trying to solve these problems with that educator he felt it was necessary to blame other educators for the problem that he had with the certain educator at the school and it became confrontational in the sense that I refused to accept the fact that I was being blamed for problems that were caused by someone else, because the principal could not solve the problem with the educator his way out was to blame other teachers, so it became quiet confrontational in the sense that he started shouting, being unprofessional... (T1; SA).

T1; SA was of the opinion that principals needed to behave in a professional way and respect the teachers so that the teachers would respect the principal. Hare and Wyatt (2007) explain that denial of due process, the fourth type of work abuse, refers to the employer negating the process of resolution of a conflict or preventing it from being undertaken. This type of abuse was meted out to T1; SA where his principal expected him to give solutions as to how to run

the school when teachers were gone to attend union meetings and workshops, since he was the site representative. Regarding his position as a site steward he complained that:

On a number of occasions unions requested members to attend meetings during school time and the principal became confrontational about allowing teachers to leave school during teaching time and on a number of occasions he expected me to ...ah... to actually give him ideas as to how to manage the school when no educators were present, when it wasn't actually my job to manage the school and he refused to send educators for meetings, workshops, and that led to serious confrontations, ah...because I was the site steward at the school. (T1; SA).

Principals are often guilty of paying scant respect to teachers who often make meaningful contribution that may not be aligned with the thoughts of the principal. If the principal is not achieving his own end and then he/she may resort to getting angry, shouting and scolding in order to quell the suggestion or input made by the teacher. This tactic is used as a means of instilling fear in a teacher so that the teacher would toe the line and not rock the boat. This was evident in the case of T6; SA who reminded the principal that SADTU (South African Democratic Teachers' Union) had informed schools not to implement the R and R (Rationalisation and Re-Deployment) process with regard to the PPN (Post Provisioning Norms):

There was tension and disagreement which resulted in a conflict situation. At that time when the conflict arose he persisted in doing what he intended doing instead of engaging in a meaningful debate with me. He was unprofessional in terms of making the issue a personal attack. He raised his voice to such an extent that he was incoherent. He shouted in the meeting, became angry and he tried to belittle me in the presence of the rest of the staff. (T6; SA).

He explained further that:

The disagreement occurred at staff meeting in terms of the principal not following prescribed procedure in terms of the document provided by the department. When I pointed this out to him, he attacked me personally. (T6; SA).

Blase and Blase (2003) have also revealed through their empirical research that non-verbal insinuations from principals included aggressive eye contact, finger pointing, slamming and throwing of objects. Verbal responses included angry outbursts, shouting, humiliation in front of other staff members and threat of loss of employment. However, principals tend to forget that in South Africa, the Department of Education is responsible for the employment of teachers. Only in the cases of (SGB) School Governing Body appointees the principal could influence and manipulate the dismissal of an educator.

It was noted that during the R and R process in applying the PPN, principals are also guilty of manipulating the needs of the school to coincide with those teachers who they prefer having on staff. If a teacher is not a favourite of the principal or presents problems for the principal, then that teacher is orchestrated in the excess list, hoping that the problem teacher would find his/her exit from the school.

The above was an occurrence in the case of T5; SB, being an English graduate, he substantiated:

... LIFO (Last in and First Out) was not used and English was not treated as my main subject in the PPN process, but LO (Life Orientation) was used. This was both ridiculous and laughable. (T5; SB).

Malpractice of such occurrence, tends to lead to conflict between the teacher and principal as was the consequence in the case of T5; SB. The teacher could be affected even more so if he or she is teaching in the school for many years and is settled in that particular school. The seasoned teacher is fully aware of how the school is run and how the principal operates in that school. They are, hence, able to detect any deviations from the norm in applying the R and R process by applying the PPN and if the teacher is forth right to bring this to the attention of the principal, the principal then views these suggestions as rocking the boat. Principals are guilty of being able to manipulate newcomers into the field simply because they are not au fait with the running of the school and these teachers are taken advantage of unfortunately. Author like Horwitz (2008), Parsons (2005), Blase and Blase (2003) concur that the above is true especially among principals who are autocratic in their decisions and authoritarian in their leadership.

Research conducted in the United States has revealed that mistreatment of teachers by principals are not brought to the attention and reported to the relevant authorities and the public (Blase & Blase, 2003). Unfortunately colleagues of those who are affected as well as families are not supportive to alleviate their problems. These facts were substantiated by the participants as well where in some cases the participants did not know which colleague could be trusted and relied upon. What also emerged was that perhaps some principals of schools are afraid to expose incidents of abuse, mistreatment, bullying and conflicts because they fear the consequences of interrogation by their supervisors from the department and union officials and the subsequent consequences of publicity and shame. The above conclusion was possible through the implementation of the Theory of Symbolic Interactionism which helped triangulate the researcher, his participants and the data generated.

In the United States of America (USA) and the United Kingdom (UK) there are associations and websites established for example, National Association for Prevention of Teacher Abuse (NAPTA) of which Horwitz K is the president, have established through documentation that the primary reason teachers are abused is to silence them. In 1996 Tim Field founded the UK National Workplace Bullying Advice Line and Success Unlimited Website (<http://www.bullyonline.org/successunlimited>). He also founded the website Bullyonline (<http://www.bullyonline.org>). Field (1996 a) was able to publish his first book based on his own experience and impressions of calls to the advice line. Perhaps in South Africa, if such organisations and websites are established, these could lead to unearthing and exposing issues and incidents of conflict which would not be revealed otherwise. The next subsection deals with the different types of conflicts and their sources.

4.3.2 The different types of conflicts and their sources

The researcher from his limited retrieval of data from 6 participants has used two levels of differentiation, these being minor and major conflicts. These levels were based on the nature of conflicts and its severity of effects on the teachers and teaching and learning. The two types are minor conflicts are as in the cases of the first teacher from School A (T1; SA) and the third teacher from School D (T3; SD) and the major conflicts are as in cases of the second teacher from School A (T2; SA), the fifth teacher from School B (T5; SB) and the sixth teacher from School A (T6; SA). Furthermore, with regard to the different types of conflicts these were categorized based on the relationship that the participants had between themselves

and the principal or their interaction with the rest of the members of the staff namely: interpersonal conflicts and intergroup conflicts. These classifications were seen to be apt since the behaviour of the principal and members of the staff towards the participants generated the conflicts that ensued. These categorizations are important since it paints a clearer picture about the sources of conflicts, how the individual is affected and their future relationship with the person with whom the participants had the conflicts.

Rue and Byars (1989) divided conflicts into two types: individual (being intrinsic) and external (being extrinsic). Other researchers such as Gordon (1997) and Firku (1993) identified three levels of school conflicts on the basis of individuals, individuals group and the organisation at which they occur. Makaye & Ndofirepi (2012) is of the opinion that interpersonal conflict is perceived as the most frequent in schools. Tesfay (2002) highlighted three primary sources of interpersonal conflict. These are Personality differences; Power struggle and Competition. Interpersonal conflicts can arise if the goals and objectives of an organisation are not agreed upon by its members.

Intrapersonal and intergroup conflicts are defined here but the objectives of this study steers the researcher to explore interpersonal conflicts only. Intrapersonal conflicts are conflicts within an individual person that can produce conflict in an organisation. Intergroup conflicts occur when disagreements exist of differences among members of a group or its subgroup (Tesfay, 2002). Interpersonal conflict is perceived as the most frequent in schools since it concerns the quality of interactions between two or more teachers. The study reveals that personality differences between teachers and principals and personal motives of principals are reasons for conflicts between teachers and principals.

Hence, the behaviour and relationship among members of any organisation is a good barometer to measure the coherence of the group and individuals among the group. The nature of conflicts and the number of conflicts in a school are also a reflection of the relationship and the rapport between the principal and the members of the staff. In School A, for example, the principal adopted a running the bulldozer over type of behaviour among his staff members and this resulted in many conflicts between the principal and many of the staff members. This was evident when T6; SA who was of the opinion:

I believe the conflict arose because by this time the principal had run roughshod over a number of educators who just accepted his behaviour. He, therefore, believed that

he could go on behaving in any manner he desired with no serious consequences to his action and I believed that the situation had to be corrected. (T6; SA).

Conflict between individuals and groups, is perceived by Makaye & Ndofirepi (2012) as developing when two members in a group, normally good friends, find themselves seeking promotion for a single position.

Experienced teachers are preferred by learners since their competence in terms of teaching, knowledge of curriculum from lower grades in a secondary school, for example, from grade 8 to 12, can epitomise the teaching of a section which would be of benefit to the students in the latter grades. The loss of such valued teachers would be an enormous loss to learners and a school in particular as reiterated by (T3; SD).

T3; SD highlighted a situation which pertained to promotion where all the senior teachers were not at least shortlisted. T3; SD was disgruntled and complained that:

...it was regarding about short listing for promotion at the previous high school where all the senior teachers were not shortlisted, that I found was a serious disagreement with the principal. (T3; SD).

The repercussion of such action by the principal unfortunately led to dire consequences where senior teachers, as T3; SD put it:

Some teachers resigned, some of them applied for boarding and left the system. This was a great loss to the teaching fraternity. (T3; SD).

Unfortunately principals are sometimes short sighted in not contemplating the consequences of their actions which could lead to irreparable damage.

T3; SD reiterated that:

This was a serious loss, because we lost very senior, competent teachers from the staff. (T3; SD).

The above are examples of major conflicts on an interpersonal level and how these conflicts can affect the running of a school.

The study has also revealed that conflicts between teachers and principals sometimes results in positive changes where the staff become more united and their relationship strengthened. The study has revealed, on the one hand, that conflicts as discussed above can be classified as dysfunctional conflicts. Dysfunctional conflicts are conflicts that have negative outcomes. Msila (2012) revealed in his study that many schools are broken down by dysfunctional conflicts that alienate teachers from their professional work. Sondgrass and Blunt (2009) assert that unmanaged conflict can create dysfunctional schools which deprive learners of their rights to citizenship through free and equal education. On the other hand, conflicts can be classified as functional. Runde and Flanagan (2008) construe functional conflicts to have positive outcomes. This was evident in the conflicts between T3; SD and T4; SC and their principals where the conflicts resulted in the staff becoming more committed and strengthening of their relationship among them:

This conflict made my relationship even stronger with other teachers and we became a stronger team of level one educator. (T4; SC).

T3; SD also noted that:

...as a staff we became a bit stronger.... (T3; SD).

What also emerged from the study is that the cohesive bonds among teachers in a staff, who belong to a common union, are also often strengthened, especially when there is a disagreement and conflict between the principal and the staff regarding union matters where often some principals are sceptical for example, about allowing teachers to attend union meetings. This was borne out clearly by T1; SA, when his principal was averse to sending teachers for union meetings. The principal's dilemma was his inability to run the school when most teachers were gone to attend union meetings. Conflict arose when T1; SA, who was the site representative, was asked to provide solutions to this problem by the principal. T1; SA was forthright in telling the principal in no uncertain terms that it was not his prerogative to run the school and that resolving and finding a solution to the problem of this nature fell within the ambit of the principal's job description. Another example of a minor conflict was articulated very forcefully by T4; SC. The disagreement centred on the problem of learner and teacher based classroom. The principal insisted that the classroom ought to be learner based

since movement by the learners was delaying and disruptive. Although the staff gave an undertaking that they will ensure prompt movement and instil discipline, the principal's tone changed subsequently when he was able to infer that he was not gaining the support of the staff. T4; SC pointed out that:

...the principal's tone was harsh and instructive. There was an undertone of arrogance and authoritativeness. (T4; SC).

As the debate continued T4; SC mentioned that the principal in no uncertain terms stated that:

...he is the head of the school and he will do what is best for the school. (T4; SC).

The terse reaction of the principal and his condescending, dictatorial and autocratic attitude created a rift and tension between the principal and the staff. However, this conflict had a positive reaction among the staff members where T4; SC noted that:

...this conflict made my relationship even stronger with other teachers and we became a stronger team of level one educators. (T4; SC).

It is evident, therefore, that conflicts between teachers and principals can sometimes have a reaction that brings about coercion among level one staff members.

The reaction from the students on the other hand was that they were unhappy since:

...they had to move about with heavy bags. (T4; SC).

This tenor of situation fortunately did not have any adverse effects on teaching and learning. The discussion between the researcher and the participants in highlighting the above minor and major conflicts also revealed the strategies that these teachers used to solve these conflicts.

4.3.3 Strategies employed by the teacher to solve these conflicts

Having discussed the different types of conflict and their sources what featured also from the participants were the strategies employed and the avenues that were approached in order to resolve these conflicts.

What surfaced from interviews with my participants is that if the nature of the conflict was of a minor nature, these conflicts were resolved at the school between the principal and the teacher. However, if the conflict was a major one then intervention by union representatives and superintendents were sought to resolve the conflicts.

T1; SA was a staff representative at his school and he was, therefore, often called in to mediate, on behalf of teachers, for conflicts that were being resolved between the principal and the teacher. T1; SA was also a union site representative and since the principal refused to allow teachers to attend site meetings, this:

...led to serious confrontations, but most often we did try and resolve the matter without taking it to the union in an amicable way. (T1; SA).

T1; SA, being a site steward also, was requested by other teachers on the staff, who had conflicts with the principal, to help resolve these conflicts:

...being the site steward I was asked to resolve the matter at school level and if this was unsuccessful, the educator requested that the matter be taken up with the union and department intervention. (T1; SA).

He went on to elaborate further that collaboration among the teacher, the union, and the education department officials found favour in finally resolving issues that were not able to be resolved at school level. In the case of T2; SA, the conflict between himself and the principal involved the School Governing Body (SGB) as well. The principal used the referral of the conflict to the superintendent as a threat to T2; SA:

Well on one occasion he threatened to bring the subject advisor in ... eh... on another occasion he indicated that I told him that I am prepared to speak to him in front of the senior education management (SEM), when I didn't do that but I was prepared to meet with the SEM and eventually at one stage brought the SEM into it, so I wasn't afraid. (T2; SA).

In the cases of T3; SD and T4; SC, the issues being promotion and teacher-based classrooms respectively, these conflicts were resolved between the principal and themselves at school level.

The conflicts between T5; SB and the principal were of a very serious nature and the principal seemed to have a personal vendetta against T5; SB. This deduction was made since the principal did not sanction teacher no. 5's application for marking, refused him permission to represent teachers at the Educators Labour Relations Committee (ELRC) for South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU), manipulated the promotion post so that he was not promoted, and used the rationalisation and redeployment process (R & R) to remove him from the school. The principal, however, was unsuccessful in removing T5; SB from the school and despite the superintendent's intervention to date the case remained unsolved while the principal has retired.

The major conflict between T6; SA and the principal which centred on the Rationalisation and Redeployment (R & R) process with regard to the Post Provisioning Norms (PPN) was not resolved. Teacher no. 6 referred the situation to the union via the site representative and the interventions by Superintendent of Education (Management) (SEM):

The union consulted with the SEM and they suggested that we try to solve the matter internally at school. Subsequently we set up a meeting with two site representatives, the principal, myself and the deputy principal. After lengthy discussion the site representative indicated to the principal that he should apologise and withdraw his remarks made to me at a staff meeting ... eh ... eventually he agreed and he did do that. (T6; SA).

A comparison of strategies employed overseas and abroad revealed the following. In the United Kingdom, Tim Field in 1996 founded the UN National Workplace Bullying Advice

Line and Success Unlimited Website (<http://www.bullyonline.org/successunlimited>). This website offers an avenue to people in the workplace who are bullied on aspects such as how to recognise that one is being bullied and steps to take to counteract these measures. In The United States of America various associations have been set up through which teachers have recourse to air their grievances. These associations are an avenue of hope for teachers who are abused and a source of solution to their problems. Two of the renowned associations are: The American Society for Ethics in Education (ASEE). ASEE is of the opinion that the papers that carry the news and everyone, including the man in the street have turned a deaf ear to the voices of teachers who were abused. They help to validate the experiences of abused teachers who have, before having visited their site, felt helpless (Horwitz, 2008).

The second renowned association is the “National Association for Prevention of Teacher Abuse” (NAPTA) of which Karen Horwitz is the president. She believes that the history of abuse has been concealed from anyone who can make it stop. This association is an outlet for abused teachers to bring to the notice of all concerned facts about abuse which are normally hidden from society.

Comments received by Karen Horwitz substantiate that bullied victims are victimized but if the teacher is a member of an association or a union, then this acts as a deterrent for further abuse. She recommends that the abused contacts his or her union representation to reveal documents like letters, memorandums, notes from conversations, or anything that shows the mistreatment which the abuser should compile. She appeals to people to support the Healthy Workplace Bill in their state and they can log onto www.healthyworkplacebill.org for more information. Generally in The United States of America, teachers were afraid to reveal their abuses and the nature of abuse because this resulted in the teacher being victimised and or fired from their job. Hare and Wyatt have set up a website which teachers can log onto and communicate with his wife and himself where they advise on appropriate steps to be taken to remedy the situation.

In Thailand at selected Islamic private secondary schools in Yala Province, Salleh, & Adulpakdee (2012), in their research on conflict between principals and teachers, empirically deduced that solutions to conflicts can be found between the parties. Comparing the methods used to resolve conflicts between teacher and principal it can be deduced that both abroad and locally most conflicts between principal and teacher are resolved at school. The School

Governing Body (SGB), Union representatives or Department of Education officials sometimes intervene to mediate. The next sub-section deals with the aspect of how teachers were affected.

4.3.4 How teachers who had experienced conflicts were affected personally

Having discussed the strategies employed by teachers to solve conflicts, this sub-section discusses how conflicts affect teachers. Principals do not take cognisance of the irreparable damage that teachers experience, physiologically and psychologically, owing to conflicts between them.

The deleterious outcomes that affected my participants physical well-being that were highlighted were; hypertension, sugar diabetes, stomach cramps, diarrhoea, change of eating patterns, loss of appetite, heartburn, cardio-vascular disease, appendicitis (and subsequent removal of the appendix), swollen feet, headaches and aggravating sinusitis. What is disturbing is that some of these illnesses such as cardio vascular disease, hypertension, sugar diabetes and appendicitis could have been lethal to participants who are affected by these. Medical doctors often warn that severe hypertension and sugar diabetes could be the cause of other debilitating sickness such as stroke and gangrene. Participants in this study complained that in order to control some of these illnesses they had to be put on chronic medication. Since chronic medication has to be taken timeously and daily, participants viewed this as an added burden. Besides being affected physiologically participants were also affected psychologically and in their performance of work.

The manner in which participants were affected psychologically were anxiety, depression, inability to socialise with family, friends and even other teachers on staff, stress, anger, rage, self-doubt and mistrusting fellow colleagues, poor concentration, lowered self-esteem and feeling belittled, panic attack and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Kinchin (2005) refers to PTSD as '*The Invisible Injury*'. He describes PTSD and its symptoms which were elaborated upon in Chapter Two.

The illnesses listed in Chapter Two led to some participants being hospitalised for long periods of time including recovery time at home. This necessitated the participant being absent from school, which affected the coverage of syllabus, especially in the senior

secondary phase. Other work related problems included reduced effective deliverance of lessons, commitment, and lack of satisfaction of execution of duties.

Since these effects are of such dire consequences, and this study being conducted through the qualitative research methodology (participants give their own lived experienced verbally) and the paradigm being of an Interpretivist perspective (where participants subjective experiences are given), the researcher will discuss each participant individually and how they were affected physiologically and psychologically and the repercussions of these.

Participants of my study recollected how they were physiologically and psychologically affected from conflicts between themselves and the principal. T1; SA stated that:

Yes it did affect my health in the sense that being a person who suffers from hypertension, it had a negative effect on my health, and I had to go onto medication because I ended up having high blood pressure. (T1; SA).

His family life was affected since he was unable to socialise with his children and wife. Feelings of guilt permeated his mind when he recalled how bad he felt since the principal was an older person than himself:

On one occasion I remember that particular day telling my wife I feel so bad, the principal being and older person than me. I felt as if I should phone him and apologise although it was not my fault but that day it was difficult for me to sleep for that incident in particular. (T1; SA).

Since T1; SA was a staff representative as well and his association with the staff was strengthened and they had held him in high esteem as someone who could stand up for them and represent them. T2; SA was subjected to threats by the principal to being investigated by the Ward Manager thus clouding T2; SA with feelings of inferiority complex:

Well on one occasion he threatened to bring subject advisor ... eh ...on another ... I told him I was prepared to speak to him in front of the SEM and eventually at one stage he brought the Ward Manager.... (T2; SA).

At a school governing body meeting T2; SA was told to 'get out of the meeting' by the principal. The major conflicts between T2; SA and his principal affected his eating pattern and sleep patterns:

In terms of physiologically it does affect your eating pattern whether it's during the day at school or at home. You suddenly get through certain feelings that run through your body and then you find that you lose your appetite ... eh ... physiologically also your sleep patterns are affected. Sometimes you get up in the middle of the night and you get some thoughts with regard to the conflict and some ideas come to you as to how to resolve or tackle these issues and those thoughts will be going over in your mind. So for several hours you don't have a good sleep or you don't sleep at all when it's time to get up in the morning and go to school, or get to work, you find that there is a lack of sleep during the night. (T2; SA).

Internal conflicts with T2; SA, lead to his hypertension being heightened, diarrhoea or loose stools being induced and experiencing of heartburn. He was put onto medication for his heart condition by his medical doctor. Psychologically, there existed a strained relationship between other members of staff and him since:

...you know there may be some people you can't trust, whether they are relaying information or sometime our principal does have this tendency of discussing issues of a personal professional nature with other people on the staff (T2; SA).

T2; SA felt belittled in the presence of his learners when his principal's tone and volume over the public address system was so bad that:

...even the learners know that this teacher did something wrong and I had even learners telling me, "Sir, we wish you luck," when I am leaving the classroom to go to the office for even the learners know the mentality of the principal. (T2; SA).

His relationship with his family and friends were affected to such an extent that they were able to detect his swing of moods into depression. When he did not respond in conversation, it led them to think that he was ignoring them. With members of the staff he felt withdrawn

from them to avoid conversation so as not to disclose his interactions of his conflicts with the principal.

I used to feel a bit withdrawn because in conversation I may discuss the natty gritty. I can tell them what I did but it feels uncomfortable because they want to know what did the principal do, what did the principal say and I sometimes wondered whether it is confidential or should I tell them, and sometimes I have to dilute it or sometimes I have to say it as it is. So in terms of your social interactions as well, anything that's bugging you psychologically will affect your social life as well. (T2; SA).

T2; SA also ended up with a major operation where he had to remove his appendix which had turned gangrenous and had to spend four days in Intensive Care Unit and two days in a general ward. These events were linked to his conflict with the principal when he confirmed that:

...it was the beginning of March 2012 and this problem started late January so just about February when it was hotting up and in March I got sick. (T2; SA).

T2; SA tried to find recourse in counselling by contacting Educator Psychological Services (EPS), however, due to lack of funds by the Department of Basic Education for this sector, nothing was able to be achieved:

... unfortunately they were lacking in funds they were not able to appoint a psychologist or provide any form of professional assistance in terms of psychological services or labour law intervention or anything like that. (T2; SA).

For T3; SD, with regard to himself and other senior members on the staff not realising in-house promotion, he was not affected physiologically or psychologically since he considered himself to be a stronger person. The conflict between the teachers and the principal, however, brought about cohesion among fellow colleagues:

I think as a staff we became a bit stronger but one positive that came out of the conflict was that the principal acknowledged that there was a problem and he rectified

the problem so that kind of situation should never arise again, that I can assure you. (T3; SD).

T4; SC recounted that:

Physiologically, this movement of teachers caused my already sore feet to worsen. I needed medical attention. Psychologically, I was disturbed when instructions were imposed on me. (T4; SC).

Even in his case he noted that a greater bond subsequently existed among all staff members:

This conflict made my relationship even stronger with other teachers and we became a stronger team of level one educator. (T4; SC).

The repercussions health wise in the case of T5; SB were serious:

Definitely, I developed hypertension in 2005 under reign of terror and I got worse in 2012 after the PPN (Post Provisioning Norm) exercise. In 2008 I was diagnosed for diabetes and my doctor advised me that my levels of sugar diabetes was increasing and consequently he increased the dosage of medication but the results were unsatisfactory. The situation was aggravated in 2012 after the PPN exercise ... eh ...in March 2013 I developed cardio vascular disease which my specialist advised was due solely to work stress, since my cholesterol was never elevated. (T5; SB).

T5; SB did not let his work conflict rebuffer on his family life but psychologically he was traumatised:

In 2005 I suffered from anxiety and major depression due to the stress he had caused me. I had to consult my psychiatrist and that helped a lot. (T5; SB).

His association with other members of the staff was tainted with mistrust as also in the case of T2; SA:

I began mistrusting educators since I did not know who my real friends were and who the spies were. Everything I said or uttered went to his ears and he reacted

aggressively to it. He was unprofessional since he used to shout at the staff meeting and in my opinion he reacted through hearsay. (T5; SB).

The major conflicts between T6; SA and the principal resulted in him being stressed, experiencing headaches and restlessness, aggravating his sinusitis condition and inducing irregular sleep patterns:

During these periods of tension I experienced stress and had headaches. I was restless and my mind was not at ease. I did not sleep well and because it was during the exam time I could not focus on marking. I suffered from sinusitis and because of lack of sleep this aggravated my condition. (T6; SA).

Psychologically owing to his irritability and troubled state of mind his family life and relationship with other members of the staff were severely affected:

Because of stress and tension with myself, I used to lose my temper with the people around me very quickly at home and with members of the staff. This led to uneasiness in our teaching relationship. People tried to stay away for being party to being in a situation where I would suddenly explode intentionally ... eh ... there were members of staff that behaved in a manner like as if I was wrong. They expected me to leave things as they are. I am not a person that is prepared to allow someone to trample over me. (T6; SA).

All of the above consequences of conflict between teachers and principals bear testimony to the fact that the repercussions physiologically and psychologically to teachers are denigrating, destructive leading to deterioration of one's health and relationships with the people around them. Many authors, Hornstein (1996), Blase and Blase (2003), Parsons (2005), Horwitz (2008), Namie and Namie (2009) and Schnall (2009) have documented all of the above illnesses. Personal accounts of people and how they were affected is presented in detail. Victims mention taking of antidepressants, sleeping medication, having chronic stomach problems and having nightmares 4 to 5 nights a week (Namie & Namie , 2009).

The next sub section will examine the effects of conflicts between teachers and principals in the manner in which teaching and learning is affected.

4.3.5 The manner in which conflicts affected teaching and learning.

Having discussed how teachers are affected by conflict between teachers and principal in the above sub-section, this sub-section discusses how teaching and learning is affected. Nearly all participants indicated that teaching and learning is definitely affected when conflicts occur and unfortunately it is the learners that suffer, though no fault of theirs. What has to be considered is that teachers are human beings and have emotions as well and as such if they are emotionally perturbed they would not be able to deliver 100% in the classroom, thus affecting teaching and learning. Unfortunately, the students are at the receiving end and they have to suffer.

A direct consequence where learners suffer, as substantiated by Blase and Blase (2003), is the withdrawal of affected teachers from school curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities at school. These authors have also revealed that teachers are silent participants in staff meetings. The teachers opt to do so in order to prevent themselves from further reprisals from the principal. The repercussions of these actions had a ripple effect since these teachers became islands, since their colleagues could have become a target of mistreatment. Unfortunately, the learners too lose out in many respects such as co-curricular and extra-curricular activities owing to teachers not participating fully and wholeheartedly.

In this study T1; SA pointed out that he and his deliverance of class lessons were affected:

Yes, I feel that the learners lose out on the lesson as such since you are too agitated and angry to actually complete a lesson. I feel that the learners will actually lose out because if the principal was able to handle himself in a more professional and sympathetic way you feel that when the teacher is happy he will be able to deliver a better lesson so I would say that it actually takes a person a few hours or a few days to actually calm down or psychologically it has an impact on the educator and that will affect the lesson as well. (T1; SA).

T1; SA went on further to elaborate that he was de-motivated and could not give off 100% in the classroom:

Yes it did affect my teaching since you feel that you are putting in so much of hard work and you are not recognized for the hard work and if the principal is more caring

towards educators, you will find that a happy educator will produce better and perform better in class. (T1; SA).

Learners lose confidence in a teacher when they are aware of conflicts between the teachers and principal. This was borne out by T2; SA when he nostalgically recalled:

... we have reached that stage now of don't care attitude if the principal shouts we come back and tell the children ...eh Nothing serious ... and they will say how trivial it is and they also laugh, but if I don't tell them, they will think that the principal reprimanded me and the principal had an upper hand over me. (T2; SA).

The morale of the teacher is also diminished as indicated by T2; SA:

.... in terms of teaching you got to be confident, you got to be wide awake, quiet alert, psychologically stable and so on and if there are thoughts that are bugging you, events that are bugging you, you would feel less confident (T2; SA).

The problem could be aggravated if learners whose parents are in the school governing body as experienced by T2; SA:

...it may be that the parents on the governing body are speaking to their children and their children are the children that I teach. So they are sitting in my class, I will feel a bit uneasy that these children know that I had a problem with the principal ... and if they don't pay attention and don't co-operate and so on, at the back of their minds they know "we got our parents sitting on this teacher" and they will have to wake up and deliver. (T2; SA).

T3; SD and T4; SC did not let their issues with the principal affect teaching and learning or with the rapport with the learners. When learners perceive unjust recourse to a teacher by a principal, learners react aggressively, for example in the case of T5SB, where the learners went on a boycott:

I did not permit this to affect the learners they were perceptive to acknowledge that I was being punished unjustifiably and they therefore staged a student boycott ... when I

was given my transfer letter. Finally the matter was resolved when I was called back to stay. (T5; SB).

In the case of T6; SA, since his conflicts with the principal were towards the latter part of the year and no teaching was taking place during the examination period, thus teaching and learning was not affected.

What has to be borne in mind is that teachers are human beings as well and as such they too have feelings and hence their affected state of mind, when conflicts occur between them and the principal, definitely will affect teaching and learning. Makaye and Ndofirepi (2012) have researched that unresolved conflicts affect the performance of teachers and learners negatively. The following sub-section deals with the perception of teachers of principals and the manner in which principals should handle conflicts.

4.3.6 Perceptions of teachers of principals and the manner in which principals ought to resolve conflicts

Having discussed the effects of conflict on teaching and learning, this sub-section highlights perceptions of teachers of principals and the manner in which principals ought to resolve conflicts. What has emerged from my conversation with the participants is that principals are not apt in dealing with conflicts with teachers. When principals are unable to resolve a conflict they resort to shouting, screaming, and trying to undermine the teacher. As such these lead to further conflict situations. Some principals, when they do not find favour with the staff with their suggestions, tend to adopt subsequently a unilateral decision and adopt an authoritarian and autocratic style in order to resolve the problem at hand. This research has further revealed that principals who are promoted to their positions have no management qualifications or the necessary training to enable them to manage conflicts.

The findings of this study also revealed that participants were of the opinion that principals needed to be work-shopped on how to resolve conflicts as emphasized by T1; SA:

When it comes to conflict resolution I think principals need to be work-shopped on how to resolve conflicts in an amicable way and to be more sympathetic and caring ...

this would assist in resolving the matter rather than to aggravate it because that's going to impact on teaching and learning. (T1; SA).

T2; SA holds the view that the principal needs to realise that he is an employee of the department as well and that he should be working with teachers:

So, there shouldn't be a conflict between a principal and a teacher but rather the school with the department, the school with the parent ... eh ... it is very sad that both employees who work in the same institution are getting caught in a conflict situation.... and if nothing major comes out of the resolution, the educator just gets depressed, and they tend to give into the bullying person and in the long term they just have to live with it and unfortunately in this day and age of democracy, it's a very untenable situation to be part of. (T2; SA).

T3; SD believed that contending issues were to be ironed out between the teacher and the principal, and that the person should not be tackled.

T4; SC strongly believed that:

Principals are leaders and a good leader does not instruct but develops his charges in a positive way". (T4; SC).

T5; SB however, came across quiet strongly in his view about principals of these days:

In my opinion these Indian principals who come out of the apartheid era are worse than the apartheid ministers the country has seen from 1948 to 1993. These principals continue to use apartheid principles, ideology and tactics to suppress, oppress and impress their superiors at our expense. Indian principals must learn about democracy, democratic leadership and constitutional principles of the R.S.A. Many of the Indian principals are popping up apartheid long after it is dead. They are capable of resuscitating it. They manipulate the S.G.B's (School Governing Bodies) all the time to serve their purpose and even the IC's (Interview Committees). The SGB's and IC's fall into their ploys as they (the parents) enjoy the status and power. (T5; SB).

Runde and Flanagan (2010), Jonkman (2006), and Tesfay (2002) have expressed like opinions when they remark on principals not having the necessary training, management qualifications and that principals needed to develop conflict competence as leaders and managers. Effective and competent conflict management skills, empathy and sympathy to be effected by principals, are the hue and cry of the participants who experienced conflicts with principals.

4.4 Chapter summary

This chapter presented the general view of the participants, the profiling of the school and its environment and most important of all the themes that emerged from the data. The five themes were presented and substantiated by research on these aspects. The voices of the participants were used to give a first-hand account in each theme in order to enhance authenticity and credibility. The summary of the entire study, the findings and recommendations are presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

STUDY SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Data in the previous chapter was presented theoretically and discussed from the data which was obtained from semi-structured interviews. Data collected from the participants who had conflicts with principals revealed that the effects on teachers and teaching and learning could be rated from mild to very serious.

The findings also revealed that principals need to be mindful of the ways in which they handle conflicts with teachers. What follows is a summary of each chapter; the research questions restated which focus on the themes that emerged, which will be followed by the summary of the findings, the recommendations and the conclusion.

5.2 Summary of the study

This study provided a lens through which the experiences of teachers who had conflicts with their principals affected them and how the impact on teaching and learning could be viewed. Chapter One outlined the background to the study, including the discussion of the rationale, research questions and a brief discussion of the methodology.

Chapter Two of the study dealt with the theoretical framework and review of literature. International and national literature was reviewed, which presented findings of researchers locally and abroad. Included in this chapter also was the theory that guided this study, namely, the Symbolic Interaction Theory. Discussion of the conceptual framework was also presented.

In Chapter Three, the research design and methodology was discussed. The choice of the qualitative approach was justified. Semi-structured interviews were held with teachers who were purposefully sampled since my focus was anticipated to gather data from those who experienced conflict with their principals. Details of how the data was analysed was presented. Ethical issues were also considered and limitations were discussed and how these were overcome.

Chapter Four presented the data which was organised into six themes and these were gathered from the literature review and were discussed in detail through the voices of the participants. The last chapter summarises the study, present the findings as well as the recommendations.

5.3 Research questions restated

The findings are presented and summarised under each research question that was posed in the first chapter. The implication of this is to ascertain the extent to which the data has successfully uncovered the key questions which were the beacons of light for this study to be guided by. As part of presenting the findings, the extent to which each research question has been addressed is also discussed.

5.3.1 What are the experiences of teachers who have had conflicts with principals and how does it affect them?

The discussion below details the findings regarding teachers' experiences of conflict between them and principals, how it affects them and teaching and learning. Firstly, what was established is that when working among people, conflict is inevitable. What the participants emphasized, and is corroborated from other research, is that conflict is a recurring issue in many schools (Blase & Blase, 2003; Namie & Namie, 2009; Makibi, 2010; Makaye & Ndofirepi 2012; Salleh & Adulpakdee, 2012). However, what is of paramount importance is how conflict is handled and successfully resolved. Msila (2012) notes that not much is researched and written on school management in South Africa yet so many schools are beset with conflicts which results in the breakdown of communication among staff members. Most of the participants were of the opinion that principals need to attend workshops on how to handle conflicts. This point was elaborated upon in sub-section 4.3.6 in Chapter Four by T1;SA, T2;SA, T4;SC and T5;SB.

What also emerged from the data is that principals are unaware of the deleterious effects of major and minor conflicts on teachers physically /physiologically. All the participants detailed how they were affected in sub-section 4.3.4 of Chapter Four. Participants suffered from swollen feet, chronic fatigue, insomnia, stomach disorders, frequent headaches and migraine attacks, feeling nauseous, experiencing neck and back pains, heart palpitations and ripening of the appendicitis. The destructive effects which the participants experienced psychologically,

which they expressed vehemently, were diminished self-esteem, humiliation, experiencing fear and anger, shock and disorientation, loneliness and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Participants indicated that beside the physiological and psychological trauma that they experienced, their social lives with their families, friends and colleagues were affected so much so that three of the participants experienced depression. These findings were also corroborated in other studies internationally (Field, 1996; Blase & Blase, 2003; Namie & Namie, 2009; Schnall, 2009). Established and emerging research reveals that for leadership to be achieved, principals need to manage conflict effectively. Principals need to view conflicts whether functional or dysfunctional in order to promote the holistic growth of the school.

Participants revealed that the collegial relationships among colleagues were affected. They emphasized how their schools lacked a culture of collaboration and collegiality; principals resorted to decisions being made unilaterally and autocratically. This resulted in conflict leading to estranged relationships between principal and staff and this made the running of the school very challenging. Two of the participants, T1;SA and T6;SB alienated themselves from other members of their staff and the situation deteriorated to such an extent that the abused teachers did not know who to trust. Three of the participants, T3;SD, T4;SC and T6;SA had to rely on a few trusted colleagues to support them emotionally and also offer professional support. Other colleagues viewed the affected teachers with suspicion. However, the data also revealed that when conflicts were rife at school then this sometimes resulted in greater cohesion among members of the staff (T1;SA, T3;SD, T4;SC). Similar sentiments were expressed by the participants of the researchers Blase and Blase (2003), Schnall (2009) and Namie and Namie (2009).

It is evident from the above that the cohesion among some staff members was used as a technique employed in defence strategy which indirectly assisted in emotional support and which also acted as a means of protection from further reprisals. One participant, T2;SA, was of the notion that conflict should be between the principal and the Department of Education and not between teachers and principal. Participants after the interview expressed a sigh of relief and mentioned that they had to get this burden off their chest. They felt relieved and expressed goodwill in the fact that some research was done in this neglected field. Subsequently they felt good about talking of their conflicts to someone who was concerned. They expressed empowerment and being fortified in handling future conflicts. The interview also helped steer them in avenues of assistance, referring to shop stewards, superintendents,

psychological services that could be of assistance in resolving their conflicts. One participant, T1;SA expressed hope that through the medium of this research, the relevant authorities in the Department of Education would take cognisance of occurrence of conflicts between teachers and principals and envisages that policies and regulations are put into place to stem the occurrence of conflicts.

From the foregoing it is evident that conflicts were viewed negatively and participants despised being in a confrontational situation with the principal. Only one participant, T3;SD felt that conflict was good since it helped clear the air.

5.3.2 How does conflict between teacher and principal affect teaching and learning?

The data also showed that conflict between teacher and principal resulted in every conceivable aspect of the class being affected. The salient aspects that deteriorated drastically and which affected the learners the most were the interaction between the teacher and the learner and lessons being taught in the classroom. One of the participants, T2;SA stated that the situation is worse if the learners' parents are on the School Governing Body (SGB). Hence, learners became aware of the problem the teacher is having with the principal and this makes the teacher feel uneasy while the learners view the teacher with suspicion. This aspect was elaborated upon in sub-section 4.3.5 of Chapter Four.

What also emerged from the interviews is that teachers who have had conflicts with the principal become, disillusioned and humiliated and feelings of dejection are experienced. They are therefore, psychologically traumatised and not in the mood to teach or give off their best in the classroom (T1; SA, T2; SA, T5; SB, T6; SA). Participants also related that they were too agitated and angry and hence completion of a lesson becomes a problem. The learners are the ones who are deprived of the full attention of the teacher. Participants also reiterated that learners lose respect for the teacher and their authority is undermined for teachers who find themselves in inevitable situations of such demeaning and abhorring occurrences.

From the above what can be concluded is that both the teacher and the learners are affected where the learners are deprived of the caring characteristics of the teacher.

5.4 Recommendations

The recommendations that emanate from this study are directed at principals, teachers and further research.

5.4.1 Recommendations for Principals and Department of Education

Principals are leaders who are in constant communication with people all around them. Therefore, their disposition, characteristics of personality and ability to relate to people ought to be their cornerstone of strength rather than weaknesses. Induction of principals should be practiced by the Department of Education and conflict management should be part of the induction before principals assume their role as leaders.

Principals also need to take cognisance of the fact that the consequence of conflicts with teachers affects not only the teachers but their colleagues, family, friends and the learners as well. Therefore, principals ought to avoid conflict situations and nip conflicts in the bud. In management they need formal professional development on an on-going basis. Participants advised that the Department of Basic Education needs to offer courses on conflict management and conflict resolution regularly.

5.4.2 Recommendations for teachers

Universities and colleges that offer teacher training courses should include in their curriculum, aspects of conflict; such as developing skills in reacting assertively to protect themselves professionally and personally. Experienced teachers should be supportive of colleagues, especially those who have just joined the profession, when they are made aware of conflicts between teachers and principal. They should also be willing to confront the conflict situation on their colleague's behalf. Participants lamented about the lack of funds for the ESP (Educator Psychological Services) of the Department of Basic Education to function effectively. Therefore, the Department of Basic Education could inject funds so that the EPS could appoint psychologist who could be of assistance to traumatised teachers. Shop stewards who represent teachers at school level should liaise with their unions to advise the Department of Basic Education to legislate and promulgate policies.

5.4.3 Recommendations for further research

This research was conducted on a small scale and therefore does not warrant generalisations. More investigation of qualitative research through the use of random sampling of teachers who are affected is imperative to conceptualise and paint a clearer picture of conflicts between teachers and principals. Such studies can generate results which are not discussed here; (principals reaction to conflict experienced by teachers; what the contextual conditions are, that promote conflicts; when and how affected teachers are prepared to counteract these conflicts; the policies that the Department of Basic Education can provide to stop conflicts, union representation, investigation of complaints, performance and productivity of teachers who experience conflict).

Moreover, much more research is required to determine effects of conflicts on teachers' physical and mental wellbeing, classroom teaching, and relationship with colleagues, families and friends, learners and learners' academic productivity.

More research needs to be conducted in schools pertaining to implementation of conflict management skills among school principals.

Finally, research on enlightening teachers with policies and laws governing conflicts, ways to implement actions that an affected teacher can resort to and collective action is warranted. Organisations like the bargaining council for the education sector called the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) and the South African Council for Educators (SACE) established in terms of the Employment of Educators Act (Republic of South Africa, 1998, Section 28(1)) has reference.

5.5 Chapter summary

This chapter presented the findings and recommendations that are propositioned to the vital components, namely, principals, The Department of Basic Education, teachers and research. It is the fervent desire of the researcher that the recommendations be implemented by the relevant stakeholders (reading this and other writings and by word of mouth) to induce an environment at schools that is conducive for teaching and learning to take place effectively.

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**APPENDIX A: LETTER TO REQUEST PERMISSION FROM GATEKEEPERS
(SCHOOL PRINCIPALS)**

Flat 8, Pleingrove
47 Plane Street
Tongaat
4399

The Principal

Dear Sir

I am presently studying towards a Masters in Education degree at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. I am in the process of conducting research for my dissertation titled: *Teachers' experiences of conflicts between teachers and principals: the effect on teachers and teaching and learning*.

I request your permission to conduct research at your school. Educators will be requested to participate in a semi-structured interview at the time and place that is convenient to them. The information will be treated with the strictest degree of confidentiality and will be used for the purpose of this study only. Participation is voluntary and the participants will be free to withdraw at any point without any negative consequences.

For more information and any questions about this study, you may contact me at:
Cell: 0843078 603 / (032) 944 4727 or Fax: (032) 944 1327 or Email: afzel.kaloo@gmail.com

You may also contact:

(1) My supervisor: Dr. T.T. Bhengu. Tel no.: (031) 260 3534 or
Fax: (031) 260 1598, or Email: bhengutt@ukzn.ac.za

(2) HSSREC Research Office (UKZ), Ms. P. Ximba, Tel: (031) 260 3587,
Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

Thanking you

Yours in Education

M. A. KALOO

APPENDIX B: PRINCIPAL’S CONSENT FORM

PRINCIPAL’S CONSENT FORM

I _____ (Full name) hereby confirm that I understand the nature of the study, I understand that educators will have the freedom of withdrawing from the study at any time and that the interview will be conducted outside school hours. I also understand that anonymity and confidentiality will be assured. I, therefore, give you permission to conduct research at my school.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

**APPENDIX C: PERMISSION LETTER FROM GATEKEEPERS
(SCHOOL PRINCIPALS)**

2013 / 10 / 23

M. A. KALOO

RE – PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Your letter seeking permission to conduct a study among teachers has reference. Permission is hereby granted provided that the interviews are not conducted during school hours. I fully understand the contents of your letter and agree that the teachers' participation is voluntary. Your assurance of confidentiality and anonymity is appreciated. I would like to take this opportunity of wishing you well and every success in your study.

Thanking You

Yours faithfully

APPENDIX D: LETTER OF PARTICIPATION TO PARTICIPANTS

Flat 8, Pleingrove
47 Plane Street
4399

2013/08/19

Dear Educator

Interview: Teachers experiences of conflict between teacher and principal; the effect on teachers and teaching and learning.

At present, I am engaged in a research project towards a Master's Degree in Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Edgewood Campus). I am required to do a mini dissertation as part of my studies. My research will focus on *Teacher experiences of conflict between teacher and principal; the effects on teachers and teaching and learning*.

I have taken the liberty of writing to you, as one of the participants, in order to seek your assistance in acquiring information about your experiences. This research will provide insights of how conflicts between teachers and principals affect teachers and teaching and learning. I humbly seek your permission to interview you and audio tape our discussion at a time and place convenient to you. Confidentiality for this study and your anonymity is assured. Your voluntary participation will be very much appreciated and you have the right to withdraw at any point at any time without any negative or undesirable consequences, should you wish to do so. There are neither any foreseeable direct benefits nor direct risks associated with your participation in this study. Should you require any psychosocial needs, these could be referred to the EAP (Employee Assistance Programme, Department of Education, Psychological and counselling department) and their services could be requested. It is anticipated that the interview will last about 30 to 45 minutes.

If you have any queries about this study, you may contact me at:

Cell: 084 3078 603 or Tel: (032) 944 1327 or Email: afzel.kaloo@gmail.com

You may also contact:

(1) My supervisor: Dr. T. T. Bhengu, at:

Tel: (031) 260 3534 or Fax: (031) 260 1598 or Email: bhengutt@ukzn.ac.za

(2) HSSREC Research Office: (Ms. P. Ximba at:

Tel: (031) 260 3587 or Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za)

I look forward to your response.

Yours faithfully

M. A. Kaloo
Student Number: 7507578

APPENDIX E: DECLARATION OF INFORMED CONSENT

DECLARATION OF INFORMED CONSENT

I _____ (Full name of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this letter fully and I do / do not consent to have this interview recorded and participate in the study by M. A. Kaloo entitled: **Teachers’ experiences of conflict between teacher and principal; the effects on teachers and teaching and learning.** I am also fully aware that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any point I wish to do so, without any negative or undesirable consequences. I am also aware that there are neither any foreseeable direct benefits nor direct risks associated with my participation in this study.

Signature

Date

APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARTICIPANTS

QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEW

1. Can you tell me a little bit about what you teach and the school where you work?
2. How many years are you in the teaching profession?
3. How many different schools did you teach in?
4. How often did you have conflicts with the principal?
5. What was/ were the reason(s) for the conflict(s)?
6. How serious was/were the conflict(s)?
7. Can you describe the attitude of the principal during the conflict situation?
8. How did these conflicts affect:
 - 8.1 You physiologically?
 - 8.2 You psychologically?
 - 8.3 Your family life?
 - 8.4 Your association with other teachers?
9. Did you ask anyone for help or seek any recourse?
10. Are there any other pertinent points or comments that you would like to make?

APPENDIX G: TURNITIN CERTIFICATE

21

http://learning.uiczn.ac.za/mod/turnitintool/view.php?id=1798666&do=allsubmissions - Internet Explorer

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2014 EDMAN815E1 Theo & Method... Turnitin Assignment - Part 2 (Moodle 25...)

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2-Thesis-2-Chapters

BY MAHOMED KALOO

CHAPTER ONE

3 INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This research study focuses on teachers' experiences of conflict between them and principals, and also to explore the effects of such conflicts on teaching and learning. This chapter provides the background to the problem being studied. It also discusses the context of the study, rationale of the study, key research questions, and the structure of the dissertation.

Since 1994 our South Africa Education has undergone many radical changes through a series of policy initiatives (Department of Education, 1996b, p. 11). Johnson (2005) states that prior to 1994 the internal management structure of the Department of Education adopted a cascading style in disseminating instructions and information, from the then inspectors of schools to the principals and the principals in turn informed their heads of departments who finally relayed the instructions or information to the level one teacher. Bush (2007) opines that this practice in management inhibits the building of close bonds among the members of the staff of the school. These problems were compounded with the amalgamation of all races in one school as opposed to racially segregated schools as in the apartheid era (Bault, 1995).

McLennan and Thurlow (1997) draw our attention to the implications of new management changes as a result of the implementation of policies and legislations subsequent to the

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Text-Only Report

APPENDIX H: LANGUAGE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

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Dr Saths Govender

19 NOVEMBER 2014

LANGUAGE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

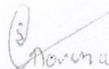
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This serves to inform that I have read the final version of the dissertation titled:

'Teachers' experiences of conflict between teachers and principals; The effects on teachers and teaching and learning, by M. A. Kaloo, student no. 7507578.

To the best of my knowledge, all the proposed amendments have been effected and the work is free of spelling and grammatical errors. I am of the view that the quality of language used meets generally accepted academic standards.

Yours faithfully



DR S. GOVENDER
B Paed. (Arts), B.A. (Hons), B Ed.
Cambridge Certificate for English Medium Teachers
MPA, D Admin.